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MYSTICISM OF JALĀL-UD-DIN RŪMI.

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A THESIS ON

MYSTICISM OF JALĀL-UD-DĪN RŪMĪ

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P R E F A C E

As we gaze at the incredible rapidity of phenomenal advancement and scientific progress we lose touch with the spiritual side of man. For a decade or more we have lived on the brink of another world war, more disastrous than the earlier two, which would mean total destruction to the human race. We are between two worlds 'one dead, and the other powerless to be born'. A new kind of materialism has crept in wherein we pay exclusive attention to the material things and the pleasures of life, with the result that there prevail nothing but distrust and frustration, hatred and intolerance everywhere. We are giving what is God's to Caesar and Caesar's to Caesar. The advancing sciences have conducted God to the frontier and bowed him out with thanks for his provisional services. A new orientation of values would, therefore, be necessary for us to destroy the inverted value of materialism and then to 'rebuild to our heart's desire'. The world has been emptied of God, but man shall rediscover Him. Beyond the ruins and mortal remains there stands the divinity of man looking at his earthly foolishness and beckoning him to a new world, far away from the present one that is in the hands of injustice and violence. Spiritual hunger is the goal; the quest is its own fulfillment; and nothing less than spiritual values and religious experience is satisfying to our afflicted souls for developing a



healthier and a more integrated view of life. Study of mysticism and the mystic poets will undoubtedly enoble our lives and sweeten the purity of human destiny. The present work is an attempt in this direction.

This dissertation is analytic and interpretative. Its object is to present a system of Rūmī's philosophy of mysticism and interpret his poetic mysticism in terms of Western philosophical thought. Rūmī is primarily a poet and a mystic for whom nothing less than direct experience of Truth is satisfying. The secrets of his spiritual life are revealed only by a careful study of his writings, his experiences and his inner life. An attempt has been made in this work to present a coherent picture of the philosophical ideas of Rūmī from his poetic utterances and allegorical expressions.

My thanks are due to my guide Dr. E.G. Kalbatgi for giving me valuable guidance. I am most indebted to the Karnatak University for offering me the Research Studentship for working on my thesis. I owe a deep debt of gratitude to Prof. Michael Gorman of Oxford, for the very kind trouble he took in going through my thesis. Also I express my most heartfelt thanks to my sister Sufiya for reading the whole thesis with me and for her useful suggestions.

Zulcikha Shaikh

CHAPTER 1.

MYSTICISM - A STUDY

Reality is complex. And it eludes the grasp of philosophers and poets. The faint realisation of a 'something' underlying all existence, a 'something' that is over and above himself has enkindled in man a curiosity to reach for it, to come in contact with it, and to know it. For thousands of years attempts have been made by men in this direction. Their approaches have been different. Some have used sense experience and reason, while others have followed the path of mystical experience.

I. In the present day world the need for the study of mysticism is great. With the specialisation in the empirical sciences and the increasing mechanisation of life, we have lost contact with the higher values of life. The result has been conflict and distrust among the nations of the world. What is needed is a reorientation of values in the light of the experiences of the Truth, a Renaissance of man's spirit with which will come the realisation that all egoism and strife are folly. The universe is spiritual. and the real life of man does not consist in being shut up within the circle of his own private interests. It consists in universal love which can be given to all. The

private world of instincts is small, surrounded by a great and powerful world which must, sooner or later, shatter it to pieces. In such a life there is no peace, but only constant struggle between the insistence of desire and the helplessness of will. In one way or other, if our life is to be great and free, we must transcend these narrow walls of our private world, and escape this strife. There must come a glorious moment in our inner life when the soul should break the bonds of our daily life and enter into a greater world, which would grant it its own rightful place. In order to achieve this, we have to study the mystics of the world, who have seen the reality and who have had direct contact with the reality. Such a study enlarges our conception of what is possible, enriches our intellectual imagination, and diminishes the dogmatic assertions which close the mind against other ways of knowing reality besides the normal level of experience. This craving for a new path of progress will throw us in the land of mysticism which summons humanity to its own perfection.

II. Mysticism is as old as humanity. Interlinked with it is a sense of need and incompleteness on the part of man with the consequent desire for perfection. There is, for man, a real — a real that is perfect. And man's systematic speculation has always aimed at the knowledge of this

reality with a view to transcending and spiritualising human life. The passion for this pursuit compelled philosophy, whose function was the satisfaction of man's theoretical and speculative interest, to transcend its intellectual sphere, and to become connected with the spiritual. This tendency to spiritualise philosophy has been expressed, for centuries, in the philosophical pursuits of philosophers and sages.

With the inclination of the Indian mind towards mystical temperament, philosophy in India remained essentially spiritual. It was a practical realisation of the spiritual truth. Accompanied by an intense pre-occupation of the Indian people to escape from egoism (*ahamkāra*), philosophical speculation aimed at achieving the highest perfection, *mokṣa*, which is analogous to self-realisation. The only deliverance from the endless revolution of the wheel of '*samsāra*' was sought in this self-realisation. The self to be realised was the transcendental self. Philosophy was, hence, a way of life, and was called '*Darśana*', a vision of reality as a whole. The term '*darśana*' is derived from the word *dr's*, to see, and may even mean 'perceptual observation, or conceptional knowledge or intuitional experience.' ¹

1. Radhakrishnan (S.): Indian Philosophy. Vol. I, p. 43.

Islamic philosophy was as much linked with religion as was Indian philosophy. The Prophet began with the conception of God as pre-eminently the Powerful and the Wise. Knowledge (*ilm*) or Reason (*aqal*) was the first thing created by Him. With the influence of Hellenistic and Christian cultures, the Divine was brought into closer relation with man and the world, and as a result man and the world were deified. The main object of man was to become as like God as is possible and self-realisation was God-realisation. Philosophers like Al-Nazzam emphasised man's capacity of knowing God by virtue of his reason, and regarded creation as an expression of the divine will. The Aristotelian influence resulted in a large number of rationalist philosophers. Al-Kindī, Al-farābī, Avicenna and Averroes were the main Aristotelian philosophers. Avicenna discussed the problem of the relation of the Universal to the particulars. Universals, according to him, existed in the thought of God even before the particulars came into existence, and the human mind apprehended them by a process of abstraction. Averroes considered reason in man alone as immortal and held that union with the Universal "Active Reason" is possible only by cultivating this reason. Amidst these rationalist philosophers there arose a class of other philosophers like Ghazālī, who dared to indicate

the inadequacy of thought, and considered it insufficient to apprehend Reality. They found in intuition a point of departure from their rationalist contemporaries and sought solace in mysticism.

The insistence upon the spiritual ground of all existence was no less marked in China. The Chinese sought to resolve their social and individual maladjustments by making themselves docile to the workings of Tao. Tao is the Ultimate Reality, the Principle, or Law of nature, eternal, unchanging and all pervading. It is the Great Way, the Logos, which manifests itself in every plane of the universe. Enlightenment comes as the fruit of mortification of will and meditation.

III. As against the spirituality that enveloped Oriental philosophy, to the more analytical mind of the West, philosophy was primarily an academic pursuit. Empiricism and Rationalism claimed to solve the question of human knowledge. The Empiricist theory laid stress on the idea that the causes of knowledge are the data which are found by the mind, and sense experience is the source of knowledge. The sense objects impress themselves upon the mind and the mind gradually learns to deal with them with fixed responses. The world forces itself on us, and we accept it. Experience comes to us from without, the only organ of knowledge being sensibility.

Rationalism, on the other hand, maintained that the mass of empirical generalisations from the data given to the mind cannot constitute knowledge. We must rather find its ground and explanation in those concepts and universal ideas which the mind used in the process of knowing. These ideas or concepts are presupposed by experience, and hence are real in themselves; they are a priori; knowledge is made possible by the mind's activity.

The rise of these theories resulted in an over-estimation of the senses, in the belief that the experimental alone is knowable on the one hand and in the introduction of mathematics as the only sure method for philosophy on the other.

The study of these philosophical theories raises some fundamental problems. What do our experiences mean? Do they really indicate, as we suppose, the nature of the external world? Are the messages that our senses receive sufficient evidence to tell us what the world is like?

Men of science answer on the basis of observation and experiment, and say that the nature of the world is material. It is, according to them, made up of atoms, which are small, hard and inert substances; things are their combinations. This view makes the material world a finished product situated in space, and attributes sub-

antiality to things in it. It pre-supposes space as an objective reality.

The Greek Philosopher Zeno approached the problem of space from the point of view of movement in space. With him space is infinitely divisible, and for that reason, movement in space is an impossibility. A thing cannot move from one point of space to another without passing through an infinite number of points in the intervening space. Moreover, a moving thing actually does not move, since it is at rest at any time during the course of its movement. Now, the unreality of movement means the unreality of an independent space. It was Aristotle who refuted Zeno's theory by propounding his own theory of movement or change as the fundamental Reality. Both space and time are, for him, nothing but intellectual views of movement.

The Muslim School of Al-ashā'ri did not believe in the infinite divisibility of space and time. Space, time and motion are made up of points and instants, which cannot be sub-divided. This conception implies the possibility of movement.

Centaur's theory of mathematical continuity, however, shows that space and time are continuous. There is an infinite number of points between any two points in

space. This infinite divisibility of space and time means the compactness of the points on the infinite series, in such a way, that there is no possibility of gap between any two points. Bertrand Russell proves the reality of movement on the basis of this theory. And with the reality of movement he proved the independent reality of space as well.

But, with Einstein, space is relative to the observer. The objects observed are variable, as they too are relative to the observer. Einsteinian physics has shown that space is not an objective reality. With the unreality of space, the fixed materiality of substance in it vanishes. Matter does not lie in space as a persistent thing. It is 'a system of inter-related events'.² "The theory of Relativity by merging time into space-time," says Russell, "has damaged the traditional notion of substance, more than all the arguments of the philosophers. Matter, for common sense, is something which persists in time and moves in space. But for modern relativistic physics, this view is no longer tenable. A piece of matter has become not a persistent thing with varying states, but a system of interrelated events."³

2. Enver (Ishtarat Hasan): The Metaphysics of Iqbal, p.51.

3. As quoted by Iqbal (M.) in The Reconstruction of Religious Thought in Islam, p.34.

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Whitehead also holds that nature is not static, nor is it situated in an a - dynamic void. It is, according to him, a structure of events, having a character of a continuous creative flow. Thought cuts it up into isolated immobilities, whose mutual relations give rise to the concepts of space and time. The world is not constituted of atoms. The new electronic theories, which possess a mathematical aspect, tend to release the scientific consciousness from its old conception.

Thus, the scientist deals with mere sense perception and divides the world of experience into a duality the perceiver and the perceived. Every perception for him, serves the purpose of the evolutionary scheme of his mechanical universe. Hence he tries to explain everything, even organic growth and life, in terms of the mechanical. He has succeeded in showing us the "how" of things. But once we ask "why" all his theories seem to collapse. And this is because he has failed to enter into the depths of their being.

Kant holds that Human Knowledge is determined by space and time. Space and time do not possess independent existence, nor are they properties and relations belonging to things themselves. They are forms of our intuition, things being incomprehensible to us without them. The

world consists for us of things that are in space and time, and space and time being subjective, what we know are only phenomena, for nothing is given to us through the senses but representations of relations. The phenomena are a sum-total of mere relations, the relation of something in general to the senses. The things-in-themselves, i.e. the noumena, continue to be hidden from us. They elude our grasp.

Reality is not mere reason nor are we ourselves. As Willdon Carr says, we are not pure intellects, and around the conceptual and logical thoughts there is a nebulous "something". The nucleus of this circumstance is the luminous self.⁴ Thought is, therefore, incapable of giving us the whole of reality. The "that" exceeds the "what", as Bradley puts it; and thought cannot transcend this dualism of existence and character. Bradley criticises all the general categories of human thought and experience, and shows that quality and relation, substance and cause, space and time, are all to be dismissed as mere appearance, for none of these can be understood apart from its relations. All modes of thinking are relational, hence cannot claim to know reality, which is a unity over and above relations, a unity which can be reached only through

4. Underhill (Evelyn): Mysticism, p.33.

A kind of feeling. "If there is no judgement, there is no thought, and if there is no difference, there is no judgement, nor any self-consciousness. But if, on the other hand, there is a difference, then the subject is beyond the predicated content."⁵

The nature of matter, Bergson holds, can be revealed neither by sense-perception nor by thought, for both thought and sense-perception assume reality to be static. For analysis, thought considers the world as composed of isolatable objects externally related to each other and tries to grasp reality with the help of categories. But the Real transcends and overflows these categories which are of our own giving. Things, therefore, as grasped by thought, never come to us as they are in themselves but only as they are in relation to us.

Again, the analysis of time by intellect is equally unsatisfactory. It conceives time as a linear series of instants. But, real time is an enduring a 'growing old', a continuous and cumulative history. One can think of this time only by 'living it.'⁶

In the life process the states of consciousness melt into each other, in such a way that the self becomes

5. Bradley (F.H.): Appearance and Reality, p.150.

6. Bergson (Henry): Creative Evolution, pp. 1, 361.

a unity — a unity in which the experiences of the individual exist, not as plurality, but as a unity, wherein every experience permeates the whole. The multiplicity of the numerous distinct states in the self is wholly qualitative. There is change and movement, but this change and movement is indivisible, the interpenetration of elements with each other being non-serial in character. The time of the self, therefore, is a single 'Now'.

Reality is a continuous stream in a process of change. The intellect breaks out this continuous stream and picks out those bits which are significant for the human life, and constructs a world of its own. "It does the work of cinematograph, takes snap shots of something which is always moving, and by means of these successive static representations — none of which are real, because life, the object photographed, never was at rest — it recreates a picture of life, of motion. This rather jerky representation of divine harmony, from which innumerable moments are left out, is useful for practical purposes: but it is not reality, because it is not alive".⁷

The intellect not only divides and separates reality, but replaces its fullness with its partial

7. Underhill (Lucy) Mysticism, p.30.

aspects. It merely specifies some present aspect of the environment, and thereby elaborates a scheme in which the various terms of analysis are correlated. But those distinct terms that are woven into a system are as fixed and stereotyped as the system itself. In other words, what is accomplished by the intellect is nothing but the static co-ordination of discriminated elements. But reality abides in fluidity rather than in fixity, in interpenetration rather than in external juxta-position, in continuity rather than in discreteness.

Bergson, hence, claims that the only way to know Reality is by intuition. Intuition, for him, is a non-conceptual kind of awareness, a state of mind in which, we are aware of the quality and flow of inner consciousness. William James also criticises the abstractness and partial character of concepts. A conceptual truth about a thing is not the exclusive truth about that thing. Everything has many aspects, none of which being exhaustive of it. And concepts that throw light on one or more of its aspects, subsequently subduing others, lead intellectualism into thinking that because a thing has one definite character it cannot also have others. So, they commit the mistake of naming a thing for one or more of its aspects.

The only way to apprehend reality is either to experience it directly or by being a part of reality one-

self, as it is only when immediately presented that it contains all its aspects. If you want to know reality, says James, you must "dive back into the flux itself" or "turn your face toward sensation, that flesh bound thing, which rationalism has always loaded with abuse."^f

The fountain of certitude is found in intuition and not in discriminating thought. It is found in experience and revelation, for the highest truths can only be experienced and not proved. Space and time vary according to the varying grades of being. They gain new meaning as one's psychic powers increase or decrease. This opens a possibility of there being a grade of experience which is free from both space and time. Consequently, the mystic-claim that the space of God is free from all dimensions, that divine time is one eternal 'now' cannot be dismissed as unreasonable.

Now, what about our own world of common sense? Isn't it a conceptional world, representing the activity of the human mind within which it is built up? Is it not the self's projected picture of reality, to which it is related at best symbolically and approximately? The fact that most of us see the world in much the same way does

8. James (William): A Pluralistic Universe, p.292.

not go to prove that this world is the real world, for, had our sense-apparatus been arranged on a different plan, we would dwell in a different world altogether. Our inclination for the perceptible has left us quite incapable of imagining any other world than the world of sense-experience. "The self sorts, accepts, rejects : and then triumphantly produces from them a "concept" which is, she says, the external world. With an enviable and amazing simplicity she attributes her own sensations to the unknown universe. The stars, she says, are bright; the grass is green. For her, as for the philosopher Hume, reality consists in impressions and ideas."⁹

Moreover, this unique world of the individual built up of his own thought and of his own perception, has no permanency. He grows and changes, so also his sensual universe is being unceasingly adjusted and readjusted to his personality. Consequently, the seeker after truth owes his knowledge to his own images and concepts rather than to a reality which is real for all and which exists unconditioned by any perceiving mind.

It is needless to say, therefore, that our intellectual knowledge is conditioned by the limits of our own

9. Underhill (Evelyn): Mysticism, p.6.

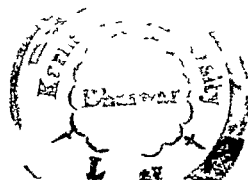
personality. Many philosophers who acknowledged this fact, turned away from reason as an inadequate instrument in man's quest for reality.

IV. Reality must be a unity, a unity over and above relations, a unity whose nature can be ascertained only through an extra-ordinary experience which is not limited by spatio-temporal determinations nor by any process of intellection. If such an experience exists, then reality is knowable. It is discoverable.

Now, there is such an extra-ordinary experience that transcends our normal level of experience, where knowledge is penetrated by feeling. That experience is experience by intuition, which is a unique experience, a reaction of the whole man to the whole reality.

Intuition is the type of experience wherein the individual self, embraced by the Universal self, passes into a timeless being. Feelings and ideas are fused, and the distinction between the knower and the known disappears. It is knowledge by being rather than by knowing, wherein the object known is a part of the self itself. Intellectual knowledge is surrounded and corrected by intuitive knowledge. The former is defined and assigned limits by the evidence of the latter.¹⁰ When the intellect grows and

10. Perry (R.): Present Philosophical Tendencies, p.224.



weary and despairing, the heart starts the quest. It leads inward, turns in upon itself and seeks to gain the truth by inner experience and waits for Divine illumination.

Mysticism has priority over philosophy, because it is not only the completion of philosophy, but also its pre-supposition. Philosophy can only establish our certainties, but it cannot initiate them. What generates and keeps alive the problem is mysticism, which starts with its knowledge of the positive reality. Mysticism lies at the beginning of philosophy and also at its end.

However, by claiming universal authority for the mystical revelation one cannot dispense with philosophy. Nor is it wise to set up a radical opposition between the two. Wisdom lies not in choosing either mysticism or philosophy, but in choosing both. Philosophy is the articulation of mysticism, and mysticism is the completion of philosophy. It is the destiny of mysticism to lose itself in philosophy, and it is the destiny of philosophy to reach its object in the renewal of mystical vision.

Reality, then, is not inaccessible to man, for if it were so, even a vague apprehension of its presence would be an impossibility. In the very depth of the being of man, there lingers a passion for a permanent

contact with reality. And in this passion lies for him the proof that such a reality exists, and that the self that seeks to know this reality has the power to attain this knowledge. The self is real.

Transcending the world of sense and intellect, we will find ourselves bathed in the Infinite life. As the Indian mystics have said, one can hope to escape this finitude only by being immersed in the Universal life. As Christian mystics have declared, the secrets of union with the divine, the larger consciousness, lie in self-surrender, through self-sacrifice.

Man's medium of communication with this Universal life is found in those strange moments of deep emotion which escape all analysis, in beauty which stirs his being with awe, in religion which creates in him a faith that a contact between his self and that independent spiritual life is possible. The disharmonies in the self can be resolved only by an inner adjustment of his being to this greater life of reality.

V. Mysticism, thus, is the endeavour of the human mind to grasp the Divine Essence, or the Ultimate Reality, and to enjoy the blessedness of actual communion with the Highest. This endeavour reveals itself in its speculative and practical aspects. The thought of a supreme, all-

pervading Power, which is the Being of beings, in whom all things dwell and who dwells in all things, constantly pervades the mystic's mind; and this thought is accompanied by the craving for a direct intercourse with this Being or God. Mysticism is the direct experience of God or Reality, where God or Reality ceases to be an object and becomes an experience.

The mystical experience is universal, for the "spiritual faculty", which enables man to attain God-realization suffers no loss from the individual differences of body, mind and temperament. There is a striking identity of ideas and utterances of the mystics of the world, amidst the diversity arising due to age, race and language. It is this identity that bestows upon these ideas the greatest evidence for their truth.

The experience is divine, and hence is of a higher order than any other kind of human experience. In virtue of its element of universality it confers upon itself objectivity, necessity and validity. The restlessness of the mind is stilled, and the seeker after truth gets a new outlook which directs the course of his life.

The instinct for Reality in man has its roots in that spark of true being in him which constantly strives to invade the human consciousness in order to render it

capable of union with the greater life of Reality. The evolution of mystic-consciousness begins with a primary break with the sense-world, passes through a new birth and development of the spiritual consciousness, before it reaches the highest destiny of mankind, the active union with the Infinite.

Mysticism is practical in the sense that mystics are doers rather than thinkers. They have beckoned humanity to overcome the theoretical difficulty of argument and enter their world by an initial act of faith. By their refusal to accept the apparent as the real, they have awakened man to the fact that there is an undeveloped power within him, which alone can lead him to his transcendence. Standing above ordinary men, resting in the eternal world of Pure Being, they have incessantly worked for man's ascent towards his own goal. In the West the mystics like St. Paul and Eckhart, the mystic-philosophers like Plato and Spinoza, and in the East the Indian Upanisadic seers, and the Persian mystics like Junayd and Ghazzālī, are all living examples of this type. The world has always looked up to them for its own salvation. Jalāl-ud-Dīn Rūmī is one of these models of men.

CHAPTER II

RŪMĪ - THE MAN

Jalāl-ud-Din Rūmī, the great mystic-poet and thinker of the thirteenth century belongs to that true Universal Religion, which binds its unbroken succession of holy souls in love and peace with their common love of God. The great spirituality of this man imbued him with a sublime detachment from the world of matter and events, and blossomed itself into the most remarkable religious literature in the world, even in the face of the tumultuous history of his time.

Jalāl-ud-Din Husain Al-Khatibī, a noted scholar and mystic of his time, married Allā-ud-Din Mohammad Khwarazmshah's daughter. To them a son was born in about 1142 A.D. named Bahā-ud-Din Walad, in the city of Balkh. As such Bahā-ud-Din claimed descent from the Khwarazmshahs, the Royal family. He also claimed direct paternal descent from Abū-Bakr, the first Caliph of Islam. The family belonged to Khurāsān, a centre of Muslim learning and piety, philosophy and mysticism.

Born in a family well-known to be expert in theology and canon law, Bahā-ud-Din Walad was brought up in an atmosphere of traditional Sunni Orthodoxy. The profound

theological and theosophical learning in which he was steeped raised him to the rank of the most reputed teachers and preachers of his time, so much so that the title of Sultān of the Ūlīmā was conferred upon him. He was also a mystic of a high order, and followed the footsteps of Mohāmmad Al-Ghazzālī, even though he traced his spiritual descent from Ahmad, the brother of Ghazzālī. His mystic temperament was expressed in the form of his sermons and meditations, that won for him the high rank of religious preceptor. His sermons and meditations are contained in Ma'ārif. This work was later to enkindle the mystical spark in his own son, Jalāl-ud-Din Rūmī.

Jalāl-ud-Din Rūmī was born at Balch, in Khurāsān, the northern province of Persia, on 30th September 1207 A.D., the 6th of Rabi-ul-Awwal, 604 A.H. Allā-ud-Din Mohāmmad Khwarazmshah was the ruler of the time, under whom Khurāsān flourished. Balch had just fallen into his powerful hands the previous year.

Bahā-ud-Din was involved in a conflict between himself and his contemporary Fakhr-ud-Din-al-Rāzi (1149-1209 A.D.) the philosopher of his age, and the tutor of Mohāmmad Khwarazmshah. At this time in the intellectual centre of Khwarazm there existed a profound disagreement between the two convents Madressāh and Tekkia. The former

was under the influence of Greek thought; and Bahā-ud-Din taught religious sciences, and discussed truth and the asrār secrets instead of philosophy. This, it is asserted, was the cause of his disagreement with Rāzi. Being a champion of scholasticism, Fakhr-ud-Din attacked Al-Ghazzālī, and other Sufis. The Ka'ārif reflects the hostility between these two competitors for royal favour. It is asserted that Khwarazmshah turned against the Sufis at Fakhr-ud-Din's instigation, so much so that he drowned Sajd-ud-Din Baghdādī, a member of Bahā-ud-Din's circle, in the river Oxus. It is also asserted that Fakhr-ud-Din was the cause of Bahā-ud-Din's flight from Balkh. But this is far from being true, for Bahā-ud-Din fled from Balkh in 1219 A.D., nine years after Fakhr-ud-Din's death, that took place in 1210 A.D. Bahā-ud-Din, therefore, must have left Balkh under a different compulsion. Aflāki says that he attacked the changes brought about by Moḥammad Mu'izz-ud-Din Khwarazmshah Tabash, who ruled North-East Persia and Transoxania. Others hold that the king envied the growing influence and popularity of Bahā-ud-Din, and that this caused Bahā-ud-Din to quit Balkh.

But the main cause of his flight was the Mongolian pillage. Bahā-ud-Din was in Baghdad when the Mongols laid siege to Balkh. Changiz Khan came storming down from the north-east to capture Balkh. By 1220 A.D., a big

territory including Balkh was under the control of the Mongol hordes. The sudden outburst of the savage hordes, with its shocking ferocity, purposeless cruelty, and irresistible violence, wrapped the age in mounting chaos. The tremendous destruction that followed at their clanging hands, the slaughter of innumerable persons, were utterly devastating to any soul that witnessed the running confusion. From this wrath the people fled.

Bahā-ud-Din Walad migrated westwards. Rūmī was twelve when his father escaped the terrible fate that awaited Balkh. Bahā-ud-Din at first went to Lishāpur, where he met the venerable mystic Farīd-ud-Din Attār, a pupil of Najd-ud-Din Baghdādī. The signs of spiritual greatness conspicuous in young Rūmī were readily recognised by the great saint, who blessed him, and presented him with a copy of his Asrār-nāmā, the Book of Secrets. It was a gift that was to uncover the depths of true mystical life in the boy's mind that already flourished on the most promising soil of his own father's learning and piety.

From Nishāpur Bahā-ud-Din went to Baghdād, whence he proceeded to make the pilgrimage to Mecca. After performing the pilgrimage Bahā-ud-Din left for Damascus, Syria. Jāmi says that he stopped at arzanjān, a town in

Armenia for four years. Thence he moved to Irand, which is now called Gurāmān, a town thirty-five miles to the south-east of Gonī. He lived there for seven years. Rūnī married, here, Gauhar Khātūn, the daughter of Lālā Sharfud-Din of Samarcand in 623 A.H. Two sons were born to him, named Sulcān Walad and Allā-ud-Din. Gauhar Khātūn died young. Rūnī married Kirā-Khātūn, who survived him. From her, a son Kuzaffar-ud-Din Alīm Chelebi and a daughter Malikā Khātūn were born.

At the invitation of Allā-ud-Din Kaiqūbād, the Seljūq, Bahā-ud-Din shifted his residence to Gonī. The Arabic name for Gonī is 'Rūn' from which Rūnī took his pen-name. Gonī was in the Seljūq hands since about 1070 A.D. The Seljūqs had established themselves in Gonī as an independent dynasty, and ruled over most of Anatolia. The Seljūq ex capital had escaped the fate of being reduced to bloody shambles during the Crusades, and at the time of Bahā-ud-Din's arrival, it had flourished into a splendid capital city, with a new royal palace, a citadel, and the great mosque founded by Kai-kā-us I and completed in 1220 A.D. by his successor Kai-qūbād I (1217-1224 A.D.). Here Bahā-ud-Din resumed his professional career as a teacher and preacher under the patronage of the Seljūq ruler. Being an eminent theologian and an eloquent preacher, he flourished under the patronage of the reigning

monarch, to whom he acted as a spiritual guide. He remained in this office till his death in 1230 A.D.

The reign of Sultan Allā-ud-Din Kaiqubād was the most brilliant period of the Seljūqid Empire which enjoyed law and order. The Seljūqid Turks were defeated in the battle of Aqsūdāgh on June 12, 1245 A.D., and consequently became vassals of the Mongols. In his "Menācibul-Qifā".

Aflāki speaks of this event and says that the people of Lonia, fear-stricken, sought the help of Jalāl-ud-Din Rūmi. This proves that Rūmi was not indifferent to his surroundings and had an enormous influence on the people. Rūmi's own Fihrist and his letters tell us that Rūm-ud-Din Sulaymān Parvānā, who was friendly with Rūmi, and a great admirer of him, held the post of Lord Chancellor in 1256 A.D. But he became a follower of the Mongols and his policy led him to his own ruin. The "Abbāssid Khilāfat" was already destroyed by the Mongols. The massacres of the Mongols were continued upto 1308 A.D. Those that were saved fled away and settled down in the more tranquil and peaceful areas. This influx of the refugees from the east was an anarchical element in society. The chaotic disorder due to repressions and taxations demoralised the people and hastened the revolution.

But the intellectual life was lively and active and there was harmony between various religious creeds and



varied thoughts in Anatolia. The Sufi movement had gained strength in Khwārazm^{zm} in the eleventh century. In the thirteenth century it expanded and spread among both the upper and lower classes. The Sufis laid stress on their sayings by reference to the Qurān and the Sunnah. On the other hand, there were some who refused to accept the truth of Sufism. Their outlook was purely empiricistic and not other worldly. Their cardinal principle was, Zāhiri-ūlūm, which means outward knowledge. They worked according to the wishes of the upper class and this created a gulf between the upper and the lower classes. The upper class, however, tried to exploit the great hold of the Sufis exercised over the common people to achieve their own ends. Nevertheless, the Seljūqid Turks were tolerant and liberal towards different religious creeds and intellectual movements.

Many influential poets, scholars and Sufis settled in Anatolia, and there arose many tariqās, mystic orders, which included influential poets and scholars like Fakhr-ud-Din ʿIrāqī, Rājā-ud-Din Bāʿi, Erhād-ud-Din Kirmānī and Sadr-ud-Din Jonevī. Mūhiy-ud-Din Ibn ʿArabī's step son was a prominent figure of Akhariyya Order that spread in Syria. The 'Kufāʿi tariqā' was one of the important orders in Anatolia, in addition to Jalanderī, Behemī and Abdālī of Rūm. Rūmī's Mevlevī Order flourished

later and many people belonging to Fütüvvet, a mystic and economic organisations, joined his order.

The inclination of the people towards 'tasawwūf' was very great. Even rulers and ministers are attracted to this creed and many were great patrons of it. A convent of deriches was constructed for Fakhr-ud-Din irāqī in Toqat by Muin-ud-Din Parvānā. Sadr-ud-Din Qonevi, it is said, lived like a ruler in Qonia. Greek philosophy also flourished amongst the people, the intellectual standards being in sharp contrast to the social conditions. Greek was widely spoken, and many even married Greek women.

On Bahā-ud-Din's death, Rūmī, now a young scholar, assumed his father's religious office and became the royal teacher and preached to the nobility. Being the son of a renowned mystic himself, he got the inspiration through the teachings and writings of his father. The intensely religious atmosphere in the family also helped the development of the mystical tendency in him. The eloquence with which he preached his spiritual philosophy, was satisfying to the souls longing for freedom and rest. This attracted disciples from many quarters.

Rūmī's first teacher in the path was his own father, for whom he had great love and respect. A torch-bearer of his time, he not only guided the people of his

time, but also paved the way for the enlightenment of his own son, who was in constant contact with his experience and knowledge. His mysticism did not consist of imaginary unity born of ecstasy, but rather of real unity born of love and enthusiasm that led him to the unification of mankind. The secrets of truth, he found in love (īshq) and believed that the source of all love is Absolute Love (īshq-i-ḡatlaq). There is nothing but separation in dualism. Absolute Unity lies in Absolute Love, that brings with itself the realisation that all shapes and colours are nothing but cover and that the spirit is One. So, fanā is the highest stage of attainment. This annihilation leads to a better and a higher state, a state of immortality after decay of the outward form.

It was but natural that Rūmī could not extricate himself from these ideas, that were stamped upon him since his childhood. Alḡ-Aflāki says that Rūmī repeatedly turned to his father's work 'ḡa'arīf', which was in four volumes, for solving his difficulties. Moreover, his own Fīhī-mā-fīhī, is a proof of the fact that he repeated the sayings of his father before gatherings. So, Rūmī set his foot on the Sufi path already imbued with the ideas of his father.

Presently, Burhān-ud-Dīn Muhaqqiq, a close associate and disciple of Bahā-ud-Dīn at Balkh, arrived in Quonia from Tirmidh, his native place, where he had taken refuge during the Mongol onslaught. He came to join Bahā-ud-Dīn only to find that he had been dead a year.

After Bahā-ud-Dīn's death Rūmī became associate with Saiyyid Burhān-ud-Dīn Muhaqqiq, in 1231 A.D., and remained his disciple for the ensuing nine years. Burhān-ud-Dīn initiated Rūmī into the high mysteries of the Sūfi-way and doctrine, enlightened him about the inner state and qualities of his deceased father, and encouraged him to cultivate those qualities. He taught him that it is necessary to improve the inner self for achieving the Immortal Soul, because, he said, the Eternal Soul is different from the Common Soul. All dualism must be abandoned, so that the lover becomes one with the Beloved and there remains neither any 'thou' nor any 'I'.

On his advice Rūmī went to Syria and studied at Aleppo and Damascus for seven years. It is said, during this time he met Ibn Arabī, the great Andalusian mystic and theosophist, who died at Damascus in 1240 A.D. Sultān Walad, Rūmī's son, however, does not mention this in his waladnāmā. But the possibility of Rūmī's meeting Ibn Arabī cannot be ruled out because, at that time cities like

Aleppo were important centres of Islamic learning where scholars met each other after fleeing from the Mongolian pillage. And Ibn Arabi had settled there. When Rumi returned to Iconia Ghayāth-ud-Din Kal-Khūsrau II was on the throne. Aflāki says Rumi also studied religious sciences from another scholar and poet 'Kamāl-ud-Din Ibn Adim, the teacher of the Kalawīyya Madressāh.

Burhān-ud-Din died in Caesarea in 1240 A.D. When he heard of his death, Rumi went to Caesarea and took possession of his teacher's books and papers including his discourses Ma'ārif. Thereupon he ascended the rank of Shaykh and established a fraternity of the disciples who poured in ceaselessly from different places.

Rumi preached till 1244 A.D. wearing a turban and a wide-sleeved gown, the traditional dress of orthodox religious scholars. The Mongols were upon the eastern border of Asia Minor. In 1243 A.D. they captured Erzerum at the battle of Kozādāgh inflicting a crushing defeat on the Seljūqs. Thenceforward they were reduced to the status of tribute-paying vassals possessing only the title of Sultān without authority or power. Rumi, however, remained unaffected by these events. Being well-established in the religious society of his day, he carved out for himself a career as an expositor of the faith and the law.

But a profound emotional and spiritual experience awaited Rūmī. On 28th November 1244 A.D., 26th Jumādī-Ākhir 642 A.H., Shams-ud-Dīn, a wandering dervish of Tabrīz, arrived in the Seljūq capital. Shams-ud-Dīn is said to be the son of Khāwand Allā-ud-Dīn, the Han-Musalman, who had left his ancestral sect of the Ismā'ilis. Shams was sent to Tabrīz to receive his education. According to some, Shams's father was a cloth merchant at Tabrīz, where Shams was born. He received his education under Bābā Kamāl Jūndī, Abū-Bakr Sīlā-bāf and Shān-ud-Dīn Sanjāsī.¹

Shams was not a scholar. He was a person always in search of Truth did not attach importance to external knowledge (Zāhir), and attacked people attached to all sorts of bonds and inhibitions. A believer in faith and intuition, he spoke of nothing but love and its grace, and emphasised the need for self-purification.

So he travelled from place to place proclaiming the futility of positive sciences, and awakening people to the need of illumination and love. He was hence called Parandā, the flier. Nicholson likens him to Socrates in view of these efforts of the sage, his powerful determination, modesty, saintliness and in view of the manner in which he met his death. Like Socrates he considered his-

1. Nicholson (H.A.): Selected Poems from the Divān-i-Shams-i-Tabrīz. p. xix.

self the mouth-piece of the Deity, which conviction created in him such a tremendous spiritual enthusiasm that he attracted a large number of people whenever he went. Those who appreciated and admitted his position called him Kāmil Tabrizī.

This mysterious being fits into Rūmī's life tragically enough. He exercised such a great personal influence on Rūmī and captured his heart with such an irresistible efficacy that in him the ardent pilgrim found the Divine Beloved perfectly mirrored. Mystical love developed between the two and in the unity of their love the two souls merged their separate identities.

Thenceforward Rūmī was a changed man. The dogmatic and powerful Shams cast such a spell over him that his all absorbing communion with the sage resulted in a neglect of duties towards his disciples and all those around him. He renounced his teaching and retired with Shams to solitary places to discuss profound mysteries of mystical philosophy. As Riza Auli points out, "he was so transported and smitten that for a time he was thought insane."²

2. Ibid. p.xxii.

The enraged disciples, deprived of their master's teachings, looked upon the whole affairs as an unworthy intervention on the part of Shams. Their protests filled with abuse and threats of violence, brought about the flight of Shams to Tabriz. He was brought back by Sultān Walad, Rūmī's eldest son, who was sent in search of him. The disciples repented, only to rise again with fresh outbursts of protests, which caused Shams to flee again, this time to Damascus. He stayed there for two years. Sultān Walad was once again sent to restore the situation and recall Shams to Iconia. Shams came back, only to vanish again mysteriously enough in 1247 A.D.

Shams disappeared. Many assert he was put to death. According to Jāmī, one evening when Shams and Rūmī were having a private talk, Shams was called forth by some one. Thereupon he said to Rūmī, "I am called to my death", and left the house. The conspirators lying in ambush attacked him with knives. Shams uttered a cry so terrible that the conspirators were dumbfounded, their senses benumbed. On recovering their senses they found that Shams had vanished, leaving behind nothing except a few drops of blood. Shams had vanished never to be seen again. This occurred in 645 A.D. All the conspirators, amongst whom was Allā-ud-Dīn Mohammad, Rūmī's son, became involved

in calamity and died.³ Some hold that Shams was buried beside Bahā-ud-Dīn Walad. But according to some, his body was thrown into a well.

Shams-ud-Dīn left Rūmī for ever and hurt to the very core of his being, the disheartened Rūmī lost all his sober divinity. Day and night he engaged himself in Samā, the famous whirling and circling dance of the Mevlevi Order with its lamenting reed-pipe and the pīnā drum accompaniment, which he invented to symbolise the search of the lost Beloved. The order is called 'Mevlevi' after the founder's Arabic title 'Mawlānā' 'Our Master'. The dance has a mystical reference to the movement of the spheres, a reference that is common to both English and Indian mystics. It is technically known as 'Samā', an Arabic word which means the hearing of music. In this 'Samā' Rūmī has successfully united the three important branches of art-poetry, music and dance. An uncontrollable torrent of poetry poured forth from his ecstatic soul. He uttered extempore brief quatrains and lyrics, which his disciples hastily copied. Most of his ghazals were composed in the lost friend's name demonstrating the idea of being one with him.

3. Ibid. p. XXIV.

"My soul in pursuit of thy love, Shamsu'l Haqq
 of Tabriz,
 Is scudding without feet, ship-like, over the sea.
 Shamsi Tabriz is seated in royal state, and
 before him
 My rhymes are ranked like willing servants." 4

Shams-ud-Din's teachings are embodied in his Maqālāt, whose enormous influence is apparent in Rūmi's writings. There are portions in the Lathnavi taken from the Maqālāt. After Shams-ud-Din's disappearance the grieved soul of Rūmi found consolation in the person of his deputy Salāh-ud-Din Zarkūb in 1257 A.D. Zarkūb was previously a disciple of Burhān-ud-Dīn and had also won the sympathy of Shams-i-Tabriz. He was a man of good manners, faithful and cautious and he led Rūmi to peace and tranquillity. But people threatened to kill him for his developing relations with Rūmi, who, however, strengthened his relationship with Zarkūb by taking his daughter for his son Sultān Salād. He then, appointed him as his

4. Ibid. XVIII.7. and XXVI.10.

با نهم ز پی عشقت شمس الحق تبریزی
 بی پای جوشتما در بحر صفتی یوید
 شمس تبریزی نشسته نما هوا رو پیش او
 شعریں صفیارده چون بندگمان اختیار

shālīfā. Rūmī wrote about seventy-one ghazals in praise of Zarkūb, calling him, in his Ḥakūbāt, Bayāzīd of his age, Jūneyd of his time and also the Qutb-al-aqtab. In his death in 1261 A.D. Rūmī found another source of inspiration in Hūsān-ud-Dīn Hasan ibn/ Moḥammad ibn Hasan ibn Akhi Turk (1225-84 A.D.) of Urmiya who was destined to succeed him as the head of the Mevlevi Order. Hūsān-ud-Dīn did not find opposition from any quarter. It is he who inspired Rūmī to compose his famous Mathnawī in which Rūmī richly praises him.

Chayāth-ud-Dīn Kai Khūsrau II died in 1245 A.D. leaving a testament appointing seven year old Allā-ud-Dīn, his youngest son by the princess Tamara, as his successor. The Vizier Shams-ud-Dīn Īsfahānī, however, preferred Īzzu-ud-Dīn, the eldest of the three princes. Meanwhile, Hüyük was proclaimed Great Khan of the Mongols and Hükn-ud-Dīn, the second son of Chayāth-ud-Dīn, returned from his visit to the Khan with the title of Sultān of Rūm in 1249 A.D. However, Kangu Khan who succeeded Hüyük in 1251 A.D. recognised the three brothers as princes. But, presently, Allā-ud-Dīn was murdered on his way to visit the Khan and Īzz-ud-Dīn Kai-Kāus II was forced to take refuge with Theodore Lascaris after being involved in a battle against the Mongol Baiju. This happened in 1250 A.D. The Mongols occupied Jonia, but did not undertake any

slaughter. Aflāki says this was out of high regard for Rūmī. Rūkn-ud-Dīn, who was thrown into prison by his brother Īzz-ud-Dīn, was now freed and was recognised as equal partner of the throne with his brother. In 1257 A.D. however, Īzz-ud-Dīn was involved in a conspiracy against Hulagu Khan and was, therefore, exiled.

Rūkn-ud-Dīn, thus, became the sole ruler of Aḡm under the Mongol patronage. The real authority was the Farvānā Rūkn-ud-Dīn, the Prime Minister. Rūkn-ud-Dīn ruled from 1257 A.D. to 1267 A.D. He was later executed. Farvānā was a great admirer of Rūmī and whose 'Discourses' reflect his deep regard for the mystic-poet. In 1277 A.D. some Turk noblemen conspired with the Mamluks of Egypt against the Mongols and planned to join Kumluk in Caesarea. The conspiracy failed and the suspect Farvānā fled for his life with the boy Sultan Kai-Khūsrau III. But he was captured by Abaqa Khan and was put to death. Fortunately, Rūmī did not live to witness the sorrowful downfall of his great patron.

Rūmī's circle of friends was composed of the state notables, lords, ministers, men of religion, judges and even soldiers. Many of his contemporaries at first refused to recognise his greatness, but later came under his influence and became his followers. Saḍr-ud-Dīn

wonevi, Qutb-ud-Din Shirāzi and Qāsi Dirāj-ud-Din Bīr-e-vi were amongst them. Safiy-ud-Din Hindī, however, was set against him because of latter's views on guitar and sa. ā. But Fakhr-ud-Din Irāqi was a good friend of Rūmi, resembling him both in Tariqat and poetry. In the Manāqib there is also a reference to the relationship of Rūmi with shaikh Najm-ud-Din Dāye and Bahā-ud-Din Kāni-Fusi, who was criticised by Rūmi for his rejection of Sūfī.

The contemporary rulers and Lords also, who showed great respect to scholars and mystics of the time, honoured Rūmi greatly. The impact of the Mongolian pillage had awakened not only the people but also the rulers themselves and directed them to prayer, religion and mystic philosophy. After the defeat of Kozādāgh in 1243 A.D. they integrated themselves around various moral forces for saving their dynasties. So, they sought to be enlightened and blessed by Rūmi, while many of them actually became his disciples and joined his creed. Amir Jalāl-ud-Din Sarātay, Tāj-ud-Din Mu'tec, Sahib Shams-ud-Din Istakāni and Khū'in-ud-Din Sulaymān Farvānā were the distinguished personalities of this circle.

In spite of the fact that all these great men of his time showed marked respect to Rūmi, his relations with all of them did not become as cordial and sincere as with

Hū'in-ud-Dīn Farvānā. Farvānā arranged ḥarā for Rūmī, visited him frequently, asked for his opinion on different subjects, listened to his counsel and accepted his criticism. Rūmī's Ḥikī-mī-fihī itself refers to this relationship with Farvānā and there are many letters addressed to Farvānā in his Makṭūbāt, these being some of his best letters.

Of his children, Sultān Salāḥ, who was born in 1226 A.D. 623 H., resembled his father much in appearance and character, a fact confirmed by his own statements. It was the desire of Rūmī that Sultan Salāḥ might emulate his father in all respects. So he was brought up with great care and attention.

After the death of Hūsām-ud-Dīn Chelebi in 1274 A.D. Sultān Salāḥ became the shāḥīd of the Nevlevi order. He systematically organised the Sufi-order and won over many people, even those who were previously opposed to Rūmī's mysticism. The philosophy of the Ṭarīqat originally consisted of the results of experience and internal struggle through which Rūmī had passed and is fully expounded in his book Salāḥ-Nāmā. His special contribution, however, lies in giving Ṣamā the status of law (ḥāyin) with certain fixed rules.

But Allā-ud-Dīn was in sharp contrast to his

brother both in appearance and character. As against the piety of Sultān he was given to vice and was supposed to be involved in the elimination of Shams-i-Tabriz - an event which grieved Rūmi intensely.

What were the causes of the people's identification with Rūmi? The causes undoubtedly lie in the influences of social, political and cultural happenings that awakened the people to the necessity of moral ties and values and enkindled in them the desire for peace and tranquillity. But these were not the only causes that drew people to Rūmi. What made them seek refuge in him was the force of his own character, his watchless power and strength, moral and religious, his human understanding and the quality of leadership.

Prof. Arberry gives the portrait of Rūmi as it is given by Farazanfār. Rūmi was "a man of sallow complexion. His body was thin and lean, while his eyes flashed with a hypnotic brightness daunting to those who looked upon him."⁵ He wore a scholar's turban and a wide sleeved gown, which he changed for a blue robe and smoke-coloured turban after his encounter with Shams-ud-Din Tabriz. This he never altered till his death.

5. Arberry (A.J.): Classical Persian Literature, p.221.

Rūmī was extraordinarily sensitive and sincere, at the same time modest and affable. Though of a noble descent, he did not take pride in it. He was content with little and he never desired anything. Even if he accepted gifts presented to him, it was for helping the needy. But this love for his fellow beings did not compel him to flatter the unworthy. He praised only those who deserved his praise, and that he did openly. A lover of truth as he was, he believed in intellectual freedom and attached no blame to any idea whatsoever. This made him tolerant, so much so, that for him seeing the mistakes of others was really observing one's own mistakes.

All sects, creeds and all religions were the same to his tolerant mind. For him the ways of God were as many as the number of souls of men. His universal love and full realisation of truth bestowed upon him such a state of peace and patience that by his nonsectarian teaching he sought to bring to the right path both the worthy and the unworthy alike. Even though well-established in favour of the king and the nobles, he sought the company of the poor. Being modest he never knew what scholarly arrogance was.

Thus, seeking truth everywhere with love throughout his life, he propagated his faith in the endless

powers of the human soul. He attained to truth, Beauty and Goodness, which were essentially the goal of his life and the attainment of perfection. Fanatics opposed him, his thoughts and words, his manners and his behaviour. But, their opposition did not impoverish him in any way. People continued to flock to him, honoured him and loved him.

Jalāl-ud-Dīn Rūmī died at Conia on 10th December, 1273 A.D., 5th Jamādā'ī Akhīr, 672 A.H. praising the Lord, and leaving to the world a vast store of spiritual knowledge and a wealth of the wonder of Divine Love. He was laid to rest beside his father. The mourners of this great soul were of all creeds. When a Christian was asked why he shed tears over a Muslim grave, he replied, "We esteem him as the Moses, the David, the Jesus of our time, and we are his disciples, his adherents."⁶

Many supernatural phenomena are attributed to Rūmī. Sultān Walad composed Salas-nāmā, a spiritual biography of his father. Later, Aflāki gives the life of the saint in his Manāqib-al-Ārifīn. This account gives a number of supernatural phenomena ascribed to Rūmī.⁷

6. Davis (F. Hadland): The Persian Mystics, p. 14.

7. Arberry (A. J.): Classical Persian Literature, p. 217.

Even in his childhood Rūmī was different from his playmates. He saw visions, talked philosophy and could perform extraordinary feats of fasting.

One moonlit night, it is said, Rūmī and Shams were on the terrace roof of the college. On seeing all the people of Qonia sleeping on their house tops, Shams requested Rūmī to wake them up, so that they could share the blessings of the beautiful night of God's decree. Rūmī turned towards Mecca and prayed : "O thou, Lord of heaven and of earth, for the love of thy servant Shams-ud-Dīn, vouchsafe wakefulness to this people."⁸ The next moment a heavy black cloud covered the heavens and it rained so heavily, with thunder and lightning, that all the people ran into their houses.

There was a lady-saint, named Pakhrū'n' Kīsā, who constantly attended Rūmī's meetings. One day she called upon him in order to consult him about her intention to undertake the journey to Mecca. As soon as she came in, Rūmī called out to her : "Oh, most happy idea ! May thy journey be prosperous ! God willing, we shall be together."⁹ At midnight he invited the lady up to the roof and told her that her wish would come to pass and asked her to look

8 . Ibid, p.217.

9. Ibid. p. 218.

upwards. On looking up she saw the cubical house of Mecca above Rūmi circling round his head and whirling like a dervish in saltz.

Rūmi was seen to walk in the air at Damascus. He was also seen at two places Conia and Damascus at the same time by a friend who took leave of him at Conia and went to Damascus, only to find him again seated in the corner of his room. Rūmi explained the phenomena by saying that, "the men of God are like fishes in the ocean; they pop into view on the surface here and there and everywhere, as they please."¹⁰

On his death, his body was washed and all the water was drunk by the disciples. As his hands were folded over his breast, a tremor seemed to pass over the body. At this the disciple, who was washing the body, fell on Rūmi's breast, weeping and lamenting. As he did so, he felt his ear pulled by the dead saint. On this he fainted away. A cry came from heaven, which said to him : "No there ! verily the saints of the Lord have nothing to fear, neither shall they sorrow. Believers die not; they merely depart from one habitation to another abode."¹¹

10. Ibid, p.219.

11. Ibid, p.219.

To what extent one can understand Rūmi from these stories, it is hard to say. The real proof of his greatness, however, is given by his works that stand towering over every other kind of evidence that can be put forward. The mystical quality of his works and experiences places him among the great mystics of the world.

Rūmi was fully aware of the violent political events of the age. But he belonged to a different world, a world of his own, built quite far off the world of murder and cruelty. From this better world he brought visions of revelations and sprinkled them upon the dazed men and women of his time. As such, the tense political events mirrored in his works gain importance only in so far as they help to illustrate his mystical doctrine.

His writings are based upon his lofty ethical system which emphasises purity of heart, charity, self renunciation and bridling of passions as preconditions for achieving the end. The end is union with God through love and eternal happiness is the fruit of it. Neo-platonism appealed to him, so that a theory of emanation of all things from God and their ultimate reunion with him pervades his teaching. The Neo-platonic ideas were given a rich setting by his imagination and about them was built his mystical poetry. Beauty, Love and Wine are woven into odes,

painted in the most alluring colours. His style is his own as his method of handling the subject is his own.

"It is a style of great subtlety and complexity, hard to analyse; yet its general features are simple and cannot be doubted."¹² He rose higher and higher until he was absorbed into the Divine, until he poured out spontaneously the mysteries of his new world. According to Baulatshah "there was a pillar in the Maulawi's house, and when he was drowned in the ocean of love he used to take hold of that pillar and set himself turning round it. Meanwhile, he versified and dictated, and people wrote down the verses."¹³ 'Our journey is to the Rose Garden of Union' sums up the essence of his writings.

The Majālis-i-Jabī contains seven sermons delivered at different dates, but in all probability before his encounter with Shams-ud-Din of Tabriz, for he is said to have mounted the pulpit only once after that event. The Majālis are written in the usual pattern of Muslim preaching and contain traditions of the Prophet, exposition of the text, illustrated by quotations from the Qurān, anecdotes and poems. Written in an artificial prose which is hard to understand, it is in keeping with tradition in its style of composition.

12. Nicholson (R.A.): Kāmil, Poet and Mystic, p.22.

13. Nicholson (R.A.): Selected Poems from the Divān-i-Shams-i-Tabriz: Introduction, p.40.



The collection of his private letters, addressed to friends and relatives, deals with personal and spiritual matters. The letters are one hundred and fortyfour in number and are written with more ease and fluency.

Fihī-mā-fihī contains his discourses that cover a wide variety of religious and mystical topics. This compilation was not made by the author himself, but by someone else, probably a disciple of his, or his son, Sultan 'Alad. The title of the book Fihī-mā-fihī means 'In it what is in it', a quotation occurring in a poem of Ibn 'Arabi's al-Fūṭūḥāt al-Makkiya. It is explained as meaning, 'There is to be found in this book what is found in that book, that is, the Mathnawī', for it is fashioned out of the raw materials drawn from the great poem. Rūmī follows the foot-steps of his father, Bahā-ud-Din in these discourses which represent a mind overwhelmed in mystical thought.

But it is in his poetry that Rūmī's genius stands fully revealed as it poured itself in all its sublimity and grandeur in his Divān-i-Shams-i-Tabrīz, the Mathnawī and the Rubāi-āt.

The Divān-i-Shams-i-Tabrīz is a large collection of mystical odes over 2,500 in number. Mirā 'ulī says the Divān consists of about 50,000 beyts. ¹⁴ The whole

14. Ibid. p.50.

of the Divān was not written in memoriam as Hīsā-Kūlī says, nor was it composed during Shams-ud-Dīn's two year's stay at Damascus as Daulat Shah holds. In fact, a part of it was composed while Shams was still living, even though a large part of it is attributed to Shams, and was written later under the pen-name of Shams-ud-Dīn. There are many poems that carry the pen-name of Khāmīsh, the personal pen-name of the poet. 15

The lyrical outbursts spring up in the form of an inexhaustible wealth of illustration that struggle to give expression to the ecstatic experiences of his enraptured soul. Kūmī is the originator of an extensive range of ^{new subjects and} ~~new~~ illustrations. New similes, new metaphors and new images are poured in. As Nicholson observes, "His Odes reach the utmost heights of which a poetry inspired by vision and rapture is capable, and these alone would have made him the unchallenged laureate of Mysticism." 16

The Mathnawi-l-Mānavi, the poet's masterpiece is divided into six volumes and contains about 25,000 rhyming couplets. According to Aflāki, they contain in all 26,600 couplets. The Mathnawi has been hailed as a unique revelation of mystical truth. It is called 'the Qur'ān in Persian'.

15. Arberry (A.J.): Classical Persian Literature; p.230.

16. Ibid., pp.240-41.

The poet himself describes it in his Arabic preface to Book I as "the roots of the roots of the roots of the Religion, in respect of its unveiling the mysteries of attainment to the truth, and of certainty. It is the greatest science of God, and the clearest way of God, and the most manifest evidence of God." As a station and as a spiritual resting place it is excellent, for it is the expounder of the Qurān and the source of Divine gifts. It cures the sick and purges the heart of all sorrow.

It is uncertain at what date the great poem was begun. Aflākī says that Hūsān-ud-Dīn proposed to Rūmī, that he should compose a work in the style of the Ilāhī-nāmā of Senāi but in the metre of the Qanṭarū-t-Tayr of Attār, so that people should study his work alone. But Rūmī had already begun to compose the work. He showed it to Hūsān-ud-Dīn and told him that he was forewarned by God of this wish of the people. ^{nevertheless} The Mathnawī, / is associated with the name of Hūsān-ud-Dīn, who, Rūmī says, was the cause of the work.

It is said that it took 43 years for Rūmī to complete the work. Days and nights were spent in its composition, Rūmī reciting and Hūsān copying, often singing portions of it. There was an interval after the completion of the first book as Hūsān's wife died. Hūsān took a second wife. In 602 A.H., 1263 A.D., after two years, the second

book was commenced; and the whole work was completed without any further break.

The Mathnawi is a wealth of delightful poetry of the highest order, steeped in an aesthetic atmosphere created by the poet. The epic deals with the mysteries of union of the soul with the Divine Beloved and with the consequent emergence of such a soul imbued with knowledge. Besides legends from the Qurān and its commentaries, the traditions of the prophet and the lives of prophets and saints, the book contains several hundreds of stories bound together by subtle links. Behind these thousand masks flows the same stream of eternal love that fills the soul with longings as well as the mysteries of the Divine Light revealed to the reunited soul. Rūmī borrows much. He borrows from Ibn Sīnā, Senāi, Niẓāmī, Attār and probably from Ārifī as well. But his spontaneity and supremely original genius bestows upon the raw material an extraordinary vigour and beauty thereby changing it into something new. "We must read the Mathnawi" says Nicholson, "in order to appreciate all the range and variety of his genius."¹⁷ "The Mathnawi is the shop for Unity (sahādat); anything that you see there except the One (God) is an idol."¹⁸

17. Arberry (A.J.): Classical Persian Literature, p. 241.

18. Nicholson (R.A.): Rūmī, poet and mystic, pp.22-23.

But one has to toil hard and search hard for the message Divine that lies hidden behind the astonishing varieties of dialogues, interpretations of Quranic texts and metaphysical and moral subtleties. Rūmī's treatment of the poem defies all analysis, for as Nicholson rightly points out, he "implies things, but seldom utters them." 19 It is, hence, said that the Mathnavi is easier than easy to the ignorant, but harder than hard to the wise.

The poem often wearies the reader by its unevenness, its long dwelling on particulars and by its repetition of ideas. Innumerable threads of various motives cross one another and weave themselves into such a confused fabric that it weighs heavy on the patience of the reader who seeks to understand him. Nevertheless, "no one would dispute that the epic contains passages of sheer beauty not to be matched in the whole of Persian literature." 20 No story, however much small and insignificant it may seem, is insignificant and small, as it carries with itself the loftiness of his ideas and feelings. His sincere attempt to teach and justify the ways of God to man and to show him the path of self-realisation fills the Mathnavi with precious gold. His ecstatic soul flies far above the realms of intellect, morality and law Jāmi has, therefore

19. Nicholson (R.A.): Selected poems from the Divān-i-Sham-i-Tabriz, p.xxi.

20. Arberry (A.J.): The Kubāi-āt of Jalāl-al-Dīn Rūmī, p.xv

said of Rūmī that though he is not a prophet, he has a book.

Rūmī composed many Rubāi-āt or quatrains, but of all the quatrains ascribed to him about 1,600 are said to be authentic. The rubāī developed into a polished and conventional art form, even though it owes its existence to chance and even crude invention. Sana'i, Kāshāni and Attār gave it a new charm but within a narrow circle. It was Rūmī who widened the range of the rubāī. He brought it down to the level of speech of the common man. But he also raised it to the highest level of thought and expression. In his hands it was also made to serve his mystical purpose. These features characterise Rūmī's whole art, his Mathnawī, his ghazals and his rubai-āt.

Rūmī is simple and homely in his treatment of his rubāi-āt which are emotional in appeal. Sublimity of thought and expression as much characterise these as they characterise his other works. The Divān and the Mathnawī are full of repetitions and wordiness. The poet skips these tendencies in his Rubāi-āt and fills in their narrow compass a great variety of fine conceptions and noble phrases. Owing to its conciseness it does not weary the reader. In these respects the poet is seen at his best.

His use of the rubāi-āt as an instrument for the

expression of mystical purpose raises their significance as religious documents. Even though most of the rubāi-āt follow the traditional themes, such as piety, penitence, self-denial and the like, there are many others brimful with a series of images not used by any other poet before him. They visualise the ritual of the dhikr or the dervish dance, and are connected with the mystical experience arising from the dhikr. The striking originality and imagery of the Rubāi-āt lead one to surmise that they must have been spoken extemporaneously by the poet in full swing of the mystical moment. If so, they represent the poet's experience in its true light.

The style in which Rūmī clothes his thoughts is influenced to a great extent by Farīd-ud-Dīn Attār and Sanāi whose celebrated poems Mantiq-i-Tair and the Masnawī never ceased to inspire him. The Asrār-nāmā, that Attār presented to him when he was a child, was also a source of inspiration to him, as it was studied deeply by the poet throughout his life. Sā'di, Nizāmī and Omar Khayyām also appealed to him, even though they could not create a deep impression on his mind. Faint glimpses of Omar Khayyām found in his writings, his reference to Nizāmī, and his meeting with Sā'di, as is mentioned by Aflākī, are significant.

But Rūmī essentially is a mystic. To him all

difference is apparent. It is nothing but an evidence and manifestation of an underlying Unity. The world does not exist. All that exists is the unity round which he revolves, focussing his thoughts, actions, his very being on it. As such, his mystical writings speak of one spiritual experience, and are wrapped in one single overpowering emotion. This experience is the source of Rūmī's inspiration. "From this the Kathnāvi and Dīvān descend by separate channels. The one is a majestic river, calm and deep, meandering through many a rich and varied landscape to the immeasurable ocean; the other a foaming torrent that leaps and plunges in the ethereal solitude of the hills." 21

Thus, he has sought to invest the Sufi doctrine with thought and experience that are his own. His vision exalts his verse to such heights that both the sinner and the saint are entranced alike. The truthful expression of what he truly is enkindles the divine spark hidden in any soul. Rūmī speaks what he is, and his diction is natural, pure, and beautiful. Indeed it is this wish to regain the blissful moment that causes him to foretell the eternal union with such an exquisite joy.

" Happy the moment when we are seated in the palace,
 thou and I

21. Nicholson (R.A.): Selected Poems from the Dīvān-i-Shams-i-Ibriz, p. xxviii.

With two forms and with two figures

but with one soul, thou and I * 22

A great mystic of extra-ordinary devotion and self-dedication, he was primarily a lover of God, a seeker of union with Him and a spiritual guide endeavouring by his words and deeds to lead men towards self-realisation and God-realisation. His poetry is the spontaneous outburst of his great spiritual fervor and an outpouring of his experiences. "The Mathnawi" for the most part shows Rumi as the perfect spiritual guide engaged in making others perfect and furnishing novice and adept alike with matter suitable to their needs. Assuming the general monistic theory to be well-known to his readers, he gives them a panoramic view of the Sufi-gnosis (direct intuition of God), and kindles their enthusiasm by depicting the rapture of those who "break through the Oneness" and see all

22. Ibid. xxxviii.1.

مک آن دم که نشستم در ایوان من و تو
بدو نقش و بدو صورت یکی جان من و تو

mysteries revealed." ²³ He has been life in all its aspects and has presented a picture of the many coloured dome of life. Truly, he has been 'a great source of inspiration and delight not surpassed by any other poet in the world's literature.' ²⁴

"My place is the Placeless, my trace is the Traceless;
 'Tis neither body nor soul, for I belong to the
 soul of the Beloved. " ²⁵

* * *

23. Nicholson (R.A.): Rūmī, Poet and Mystic, p.25.

24. Ibid, p.26.

25. Nicholson (R.A.): Selected Poems from the Divān-i-Shams-i-Tabrīz. xxxi.6.

مکانم لامکان باشد نشانم بی نشان باشد
 نه تن باشد نه جان باشد که من از جان بمانم

CHAPTER III

NATURE OF MYSTICISM

I. The spiritual history of man reveals distinct fundamental attitudes towards the unseen and one of the methods whereby man has sought to get in touch with it is the way of mysticism. Mysticism springs from the religious desire, a desire that is allied with a temperament of speculative boldness for an intimate communion with God or Reality. The most important fact of this personal experience is its complete adjustment to the realm of the unseen and its consciousness of communion with a personal Being constituting the essence of that unseen realm. Mysticism may be looked upon as the active expression of a power latent in the whole race, the power of perceiving transcendental reality, for few people pass through life without this mystical feeling.

The word "mysticism" has had a very uncertain connotation. The older expression 'mystical theology' originally meant the direct, secret, and incommunicable knowledge of God as against natural theology and dogmatic theology. The German word 'Mysticismus' stands for the cult of the supernatural for a spiritualistic exploitation of psychological research. The word 'Mystik', another German word, stands for immediate experience of a divine-

human intercourse. Mysticism has been used to mean the first hand experience of the direct intercourse with God and the doctrine of the soul's possible union with the absolute reality.

However, German words "Mystik", "Mysticismus", French words "Mystique", "Mysticisme", Italian "Mysticismo" are all forms of speculative and religious thought rather than of feeling. They profess to get an immediate apprehension of the divine essence or the ultimate ground of existence. They also present the historic doctrine of the union of the human soul with the Ultimate Reality.

Mysticism scarcely admits of rigid definition. It is so complex and so mixed with the mental and spiritual life of man that it is impossible to trace its essence. It must have grown out of cross currents of thoughts and feeling. It appears among all races and in all periods whenever the human soul sought to go nearer the Unseen.

And yet, mysticism has various definitions — some which imply the existence of God and some which do not imply the existence of God. Otto and Stace, for instance, have shown that it is not necessary to postulate the existence of God for a theory of mysticism. Prof. Rufus Jones says "Mysticism expresses the type of religion which puts the emphasis on immediate awareness

of relation with God, on direct and immediate consciousness of the Divine Presence. It is religion in its most acute, intense and living stage". Similarly, Vernon says, "The subject matter of mystical theology is an experiential knowledge of God, which is the result of the embrace of unitive love."

Then there is St. Francis of Sales who defines mysticism as the loving intercourse between the soul and God. "Speculative Theology", he says, "tends to the knowledge of God. Mystical Theology tends to the love of God — mental prayer and mystical theology neither more nor less than the loving intercourse which the soul holds with God — concerning His infinite goodness in uniting and joining Himself to her". Joly repeats these words when he says, "Every Christian who is in a state of grace loves God and is more or less of a mystic, but the mystic properly so called, is one who is wrapped up in and filled with the love of God."¹

Prof. Arberry defines mysticism as a 'constant and unvarying phenomenon of the universal yearning of the human spirit for personal communion with God.'² Or rather, as Zachner puts it, "it is the realisation of a

1. As quoted by Selbie (W.B.) in The Psychology of Religion, p.265.

2. Arberry (A.J.): Sufism; p.11.

union or a unity with or in something that is consciously, if not infinitely greater than the empirical self."³

For Underhill, mysticism is "the science of the Ultimates, the science of union with the Absolute and nothing else, and . . . the mystic is the person who attains to this union, not the person who talks about it. Not to know about, but to Be, is the mark of the real initiate."⁴ Mysticism is "the art of inner adjustment by which man apprehends the Universe as a whole, instead of its particular parts. As such it is an experience which suggests a fulfilment of vital and mental processes; it is not the monopoly of gifted individuals, while its absence implies an impoverishment and even a warping of mind and personality."⁵ Mysticism is a highly specialised form of search for the Absolute, a thirst for a completed life and an endeavour to enjoy the blessedness of communion with it. It implies a certain metaphysical conception of God or Absolute and soul. It also implies a 'mystic way' of attaining union with the Absolute, the first effort being its philosophic aspect and the next being the religious or practical aspect. The religious devotee has no direct

3. Zaehner: Hindu and Muslim Mysticism; p.5.

4. Underhill (Evelyn): Mysticism; p.72.

5. Mukerjee (Radhakamal): The Theory and Art of Mysticism; p.xii.

IV

contact with God. His relation with God is only mediate. But the mystic has direct experience of God or Ultimate Reality. He aims at absorption of the individual with the Absolute or realisation of the identity with it. It is not the Knowledge that all things are one, but the union which logically follows from such a Knowledge that constitutes the mystic attainment.

Edward Caird defines mysticism as "religion in its most concentrated and exclusive form; the attitude of mind in which all other relations are swallowed up in the relation of the soul to God."⁶ Mystical experience is not the extension of sense experience. It, in fact, transcends sense-experience where subject and object are one. "The science of the Sufis," says Ghazzālī, "aims at detaching the heart from all that is not God and at giving to it for sole occupation the meditation of the Divine being."⁷ It is a perpetual return to God, to the original and inexhaustible datum, "from which may be drawn out new suggestions; new dogmas — not in the form of pure metal, but in the form of ore."⁸ It is not merely contemplating the Absolute out of religious curiosity, but an organic consummation of love of God or Absolute. This consummation

6. Encyclopaedia of Religion and Ethics; Vol. IX.

7. James (William): The Varieties of Religious Experience; p.402.

8. Bennet (Charles A.): A Philosophical Study of Mysticism; p.109.

implies the abolition of individuality into the Absolute and presupposes urge for and love of God. It is, hence, "essentially a movement of the heart", which 'is the inmost sanctuary of personal being, the deep root of its love and will, the very source of its energy and life.' ⁹ Desire and love are essential to make one a mystic, for it is the hunger of the heart that can make one feel and act on such a hard scale. Mysticism is thus rooted in the very being of the mystic; it is in essence the concentration of all the forces of the soul upon a 'supernatural object' conceived and loved as a living Person. "Love and desire are the fundamental necessities; and where they are absent, man, even though he be a visionary, cannot be called a mystic." ¹⁰

All this is applicable to Christian and Muslim mysticism, but hardly to either the Upanishadic or Yogic system, because what these systems aim at is moksha or release of soul from the wretched condition into the true immortal state beyond space and time. In other words, their yearning is a yearning for a changed condition rather than for a personal being. Although the theistic Yoga emphasises the contemplation of God in His perfection, this contemplation does not lead one to any love of Him, nor does it ignite any desire in the aspirant to unite with

9. Underhill (Evelyn): Mysticism; pp.71-72.

10. Ibid., p.89.

Him. It only creates the desire to detach oneself from everything to the end that one enjoys absolute independence, freedom and isolation.

In his Mysticism East and West, Otto holds that, etymologically, the word mystic has nothing to do with a union. "Our modern use of the word", he says, "is derived from the Scholastic tradition. 'Mystica' was originally an adjective qualifying the substantive 'Theologia'. The essence of the mystica theologic in distinction from the usual theologia lay in the fact that it claimed to teach a deeper 'mystery' and to impart secrets and reveal depths which were otherwise unknown." ¹¹ Men were aware of mystical sense before mystical theology developed. The purpose of the mystical sense was to interpret the various hidden meanings of the scriptures. As such, some prophetic souls may have experience and direct communion with the Ultimate Reality without in any way implying contact with God. According to this view mysticism is a science of the union with the Absolute in a broader sense. "Mysticism can also exist where there is no conception of God at all, or where for the final experience itself His existence is a matter of indifference." ¹² Stace shows

11. Otto (Rudolph): Mysticism East and West, p.141.

12. *Ibid.*, p.142.

that an atheistic form of mysticism may exist, because the conception of a God need not be the central point of experience.¹³ In this sense the Buddha may be considered a mystic. The Buddha denied the existence of any Supreme Being, although he had the direct experience of Reality. Similarly, the Jaina Tirthankaras had the vision of Truth. Their experiences are not to be interpreted as communion with any higher Deity or God.

Consequently, if mysticism is to be understood strictly as an immediate, non-discursive, intuitive relation of the soul to the Absolute, there would be no mysticism in atheistic religions like Buddhism and Jainism. But if the word is employed to cover the whole range of extra or supra-rational aims, intuitions and practices, methods of concentration of thought, trances and the preparatory part of the attainment of knowledge, there may be said to be mysticism in Buddhism, even in the absence of this characteristic.

Thus for some, mysticism is an attitude to life, for others, a state of soul and for still others, a relationship to God. Religions that are strictly nontheistic do not lend themselves to mysticism. Christianity may be called an exception in so far as it introduces the

13. Stace (S.T.): The Teachings of the Mystics; p.24.

idea of Incarnation of God in the Person of Christ an idea that is wholly foreign to any strict monotheistic system. Such an idea is unacceptable to Islam as well as to Judaism, which never developed a mystical tradition. Both maintained the impossibility of union between a finite creature and a transcendental God. For this reason the sufis who talked of union of the finite and the infinite, sought desperately to show that their teachings and their thoughts are not at variance with the Orthodoxy, but that they are rather a deepening of the Orthodoxy. Otherwise, Sufism can be considered to be a radical separation from the orthodox doctrine, so much so that it constitutes almost a separate religion. As against this, mysticism is the very substance of Indian religions, whose theological thinking is mystical through and through. Hinduism is free from all dogmas, and the mystic is allowed an uninhibited expression of his ideas.

The key-notes of mysticism are growth, autonomy, self-revelation, self-actualisation and self-transcendence.¹⁴ Man cannot complete himself without relating the goals and values of his individualised ego to the wholeness of being and to the Universe. This is possible

14. Mukherjee (Radhakamal): The Theory and Art of Mysticism; p.14.

only when all his ego-centric desires and goals are transformed into the ultimate values and meanings of life. All the powers latent in him are exalted to the point of genius in the mystic, and the transcendental consciousness dominates the normal consciousness. The mystic dwells in a different world of his own; and his mysticism is a complete system of life carrying its own guarantees and obligations. As Dean Inge observes, time, place, nationality and creed have no relevance for a mystic and from his writings we cannot say whether the mystic is a 'Neo-Platonist, a Sufi, a Buddhist, a Catholic, a Quaker.' 15

The whole life and the existence of the mystic is an endlessly progressive search for Reality in his being and in his environment. Mysticism starts with search for truth within oneself. Knowledge of the self is the first step towards mystical experience. This was emphasised by Socrates when he said 'Know Thyself'. In India realisation of the self is the highest end in philosophy. 16 There is no other way. 17

Underhill gives five characteristics of mysticism:

15. Ibid., p.xvi.

16. Bṛhadāraṇyaka II, IV-5 'ātma vāre dr̥ṣṭavyaḥ'

17. Yajurveda. I.18. 'Na anyathā vidyate'.

(1) Mysticism is active and practical rather than passive and theoretical. It is an organic life process, an experience which marks the transition of soul from the life of sense to the life of spirit; an achievement that is the most complete expression of life. It is at once an act of love, an act of surrender and an act of supreme perception. ¹⁸

(2) Mysticism is an entirely spiritual activity, its aims being wholly transcendental, and spiritual knowledge of God is gained by actual communion and its possessor loses himself in the Divine substance. "Whatever share of this world", says Rābiā, "Thou dost bestow on me, bestow it on Thine enemies, and whatever share of the next world Thou dost give me, give it to Thy friends. Thou art enough for me." ¹⁹ Thus sunk and lost in the Deity, he loses the consciousness of all creature distinctions. All things are gathered together into the one Divine sweetness, his own being having been penetrated by the Divine Substance.

(3) The business and method of Mysticism is Love. Mysticism is the eager outgoing activity, whose driving power is generous love — Love that is the active expe-

¹⁸. Underhill (Evelyn): Mysticism; p.84.

¹⁹. As quoted by Underhill in Mysticism; p.85.

ssion of his will, his innate tendency to God. Love as applied to the mystic is the ultimate expression of the self's most vital tendencies, not the superficial affection or emotion. It is "the total dedication of the will; the deep-seated desire and tendency of the soul towards its Source."²⁰ Reality is a living and personal object of life and Love is the life-movement of the self towards it.

(4) Mysticism entails a definite psychological experience. Union with Reality is a form of life that is arrived at by an arduous psychological and spiritual process, the so-called mystic way, and consequently by the complete remaking of personality. The mystic's whole psychical constitution is involved in his movement towards the Real. The spiritual transcendence attained by him presupposes an impulse for moral perfection and the complete inward transmutation, which raises the whole self to the condition in which conscious and permanent union with the Absolute takes place. The mystic needs nothing more than the apprehension of God and passion for the Absolute. He needs "a nature capable of extraordinary concentration, an exalted moral emotion, and a nervous organisation of the artistic type."²¹ All these are necessary to the successful development of the mystic life process.

20. Underhill (Evelyn): Mysticism; p.85.

21. Ibid., p.91.

(5) Mysticism is not self-seeking. It is not the quest undertaken for the pleasure of the Beatific Vision, nor for the pleasure of the union with the Absolute. It is rather the pursuit undertaken solely for love's sake which is itself the fulfilment of the mystic's highest duty. It yields him the highest satisfaction. It is the sacred flame that awakens the spirit of man to human incompleteness and impels him to work without any hope of reward. It finds its fulfilment in the annihilation of self-hood and this brings the completion of his personality.

II. Every religion, whether activistic or quietistic must, sooner or later, result in mysticism. In this conception of God, man has reached a cosmic gregariousness. The idea of gods or ghosts as spiritual powers did take possession of the primitive man, even though religious mysticism in the higher sense of the word as an intuitive and ecstatic union with the Deity obtained by means of contemplation, is seldom found among primitive races. Absence of the idea of God as a spiritual and universal Being did not involve him in the series of abstractions and psychological analysis ordinarily found in the mystical practices. Mana was considered a superhuman power dwelling in favoured individuals. The chiefs and sorcerers partook of this superhuman power which worked through

then, and they were conceived as god-like persons. In a sense, this phenomenon must be designated as a case of mysticism. Various forms of Shamanism and fetishism were mystical in nature. The trances produced by means of dancing — giving rise to a state of ecstasy — come within the sphere of mysticism.

Hinduism in all its forms and manifestations is seen to be powerfully and continuously affected by the thought of a spiritual world. The sense of reality of the spiritual as well as the insight and desire to pierce the heart of things aroused the mystical spirit in the Hindus; and its occupation with the spiritual world expresses itself in its doctrines of *Māya* and its *Monism*, which belong to the very nature of mysticism. In its contempt of the world of sense and in its determined quest for an ultimate unity, Hinduism is in its fullest accord with the mystic spirit. Its quest is impelled by two motives, an escape and an attainment — an escape of the soul from the bondage of the empirical existence and union with the Ultimate One.

The mystical trend had already begun to cast its spell on the Indian spirit at the close of the Vedic Period as is revealed in the hymns that are supposed to belong to this period. The Vedic Aryans, like the Greeks were primarily concerned with the happiness in this world.

Their invocations to the gods were more concerned with their desire to get more cows and more rain. Nevertheless, their hymns do present the mystic tendency. In fact, the hymns of the Rgveda form the foundation of subsequent Indian mystical thought. The possibility of union or identification of the human spirit and the spirit of the Universe was set forth before the human thought by the introduction of 'Tapas' and 'Kāma', the two agents calling forth being from non-being. In one of the hymns 'tapas' or heat is said to produce the order of the world (ṛta). The primal seed or germ of mind (manas) that represented the idea of an élan vital in the Universe, the source of the flux of things, impelled Indian thought towards overcoming Kāma, or desire.

The philosophical mysticism of the Upanisads sprang from the Vedic religion. The Upanisads land us in the very midst of Indian mystical speculation. As Joyce observes, the Upanisads contain the whole story of the mystic faith. They seek the Changeless One, the reality of all that is, and they seek this Changeless One beyond all contradictions and negations. "All that is Brahman. He is myself within the heart, smaller than a mustard seed, smaller than a canary seed, or the kernel of canary seed. He also is myself within the heart, greater than

the earth, greater than the sky, greater than the heaven,
greater than all these worlds." 22

In other words, as in Neo Platonism, the Ultimate One in the Upanisads is everything and nothing, including all the universe and at the same time transcending all thought and speech. A further evidence of the mystical character of this religion is to be found in its tendency towards the complete identification of the soul and God. In its craving for an ultimate unity, a craving filled with deep emotion, in its discontent with the finite and in its conviction that what is within the soul is in close affinity with what is highest above, the Upanisads are deeply wrought in mystical reflection, in spite of their intellectual character and metaphysics. Later, the Shakti movement also reveals these characteristic longings of the mystical spirit even more fervently, warm as it is with emotional mysticism, which centres chiefly in the names of Kāma and Kṛiṣṇa.

The idea of mystical consciousness and the idea of a transcendent One was introduced to the Greek mind by the theosophical speculation of Plotinus and other Neo-Platonists. Neo-Platonism appears in the first half of

22. Chhândogya Upanisad. III.14.3.

the third century and has its greatest representative in Plotinus, who was born in Egypt in about 205 A.D. The Platonic philosophy was developed by him into an elaborate system by means of the doctrine of emanation. For Plato, the One, the Good and the idea of the Good, were identical, inseparable from the world of Idea of which it was represented as the crown. Plotinus, on the other hand, exalted the One above the Universal Mind 'Nous', and conceived it as transcending existence altogether, not at all cognisable by reason. This One is the Absolute Unity, the ground of all beings, the highest Thought, the Highest Good and the Highest Beauty. It is inconceivable, ineffable and can only be expressed by negation. Remaining itself in repose it rays out from its own fullness an image of itself which is called Nous, the Universal mind, which constitutes the system of ideas of the intelligible world. Though inferior to the One, it is the home of the Ideas and the true archetype of the phenomenal world. It is the pure contemplation of the Platonic forms or ideas. The Universal Soul, $\psi\chi\alpha$, a product of the Nous begins by its motion corporeal matter. Matter is the absence of Form, mere defect and privation. The whole system corresponds to the rays which proceed from the Sun into empty space. The Sun stands for the One, the rays of the divine becoming duller and duller as they proceed till



at last all light is lost and total darkness remains. This darkness is pure non-being, which is beyond all emanations. Plotinus further believed that every perfect being has an urgent need of self-expression. The One remains unmoved and undiminished, its substance unchanged, but its energy streaming over. All things partake of this One in proportion to their approximation to the divine centre, striving upward all the while to that Unity without which they would not exist. The cosmos arises out of this strife and of this series of emanations or descending steps. Each step is farther away from the divine One than the previous step, a step downward in point of value. Material existence is itself estrangement from God. The soul belongs to the Universal Soul, even though it enters the realm of matter, passing through the frontiers of the Intelligible. Though embodied, she is spiritual; and her imperfection, arising due to the contaminating influence of the body, can be eradicated as soon as this tie is dissolved. Consequently, the ultimate goal of individual soul is to transcend individuality and to travel homeward by a series of ascending stages which correspond to those of descent. Shedding her humanity, she rises beyond reason and knowledge and ascends to mystical union with the One.

In the historical review of mysticism, Neoplatonism plays an important role in as much as it serves as the pre-supposition of later mysticism. Christianity, Islam and various other religions have been susceptible to its influence, and the theories of Lao-Tse are no exception. The theories of Lao-Tse suggest many resemblances to the Brahmanical Philosophy as well as to the Greek thought. The Chinese thought clusters round its central mystical idea the Tao; Tao may be translated as 'the Way' the law and operation of the Universe. It is a Void, the Emptiness that is never filled, out of which all things come. Thus conceived, it is the source of the world, prior even to God, who is one of the differentiations into which its Emptiness divides itself. The Ultimate Unity is inaccessible to knowledge, apprehensible only by an intuitive instinct, illumined by occasional lapses into a state of ecstasy.

Judaism also gives prominence to the element of personal inward experience as a means of union with the Ultimate Reality or God. In spite of its unmystical attitude towards God, it finds the expression of its mysticism in the O.T. In the examples of Isaiah's vision of a God, Ezekiel's fits of ecstasy and the like instances, the O.T. shows forth the visionary experiences of the

Prophets and the all-inclusiveness of the *Isit*. It gives the characteristic mystic moods, the attainment of insight into the will of God and other constituents of the mystical consciousness.

But, even though the Jewish tradition does include instances of the experience of union with God as for instance, in Abulafia and some other Hasidim, visions of the throne and of celestial mansions, the concept of union does not constitute a part of Jewish mysticism. As such, mysticism in Jewish tradition does not mean what it means in other religions. ²³

In the West mysticism could not become a prominent factor before the decay of Greek and Jewish civilisations. The clear naturalism of the Greeks and the rigid monotheism of the Jewish mind, coupled with its worldly realism, could not lend promising soil to mysticism, which had therefore to wait till the downfall of these civilisations.

Stace holds that there is no evidence for supposing that Jesus was a mystic, in the sense of a person who possessed the mystical consciousness. Even though the Johannine Jesus utters certain mystical sounding phrases

23. Stace (A.T.): The Teachings of the Mystics; p.222.

in the Gospel of St. John as "I and my Father are one", "He who has seen me has seen the Father", there is no hint of it in the synoptic gospels. In view of the absence of any of the mystical sayings in the synoptic gospels one is compelled to believe that the historical Jesus did not utter them and that they were the work of the author of the fourth gospel. Even then, we cannot conclude that the author of the Gospel was a mystic and that Christian mysticism originated with him. His work reveals him to be a sympathiser of mysticism, rather than a mystic himself, even though there is a possibility of his having mystical experience; Christian mysticism, therefore, begins neither with Jesus nor with the author of the Fourth Gospel. 24

however, mysticism appeared contemporaneously with Christianity in Western thought as a sign of world weariness and deep religious need. Knowledge was rained with fresh interest and with the quest of the Infinite Reality, which gave the last age of Greek Philosophy a theosophical character. The speculations of Neo-Platonism made a definite entry into Christian thought at about the end of the fifth century when the ancient philosophy was just dying out of the schools of Athens. To the Christian ('New Testament') mind there is a spiritual and

24. Ibid., p.125.

Universal Being that fills the finite human spirit. There is no single mystic way, as all souls may have revelation of God.

The mysticism of the mediaeval Church is directly derived from Neo-Platonism, which gained entry into Christian thought through the writings attributed to the Pseudo-Dionysius. It appeared in the mediaeval Church in Bernard of Clairvaux as a protest against the dialectical spirit of Abelard and was cultivated by the Victorines. It began as an attempt to give a mystical interpretation to the doctrines of Christianity; and the doctrines of Proclus were developed into a system of esoteric Christianity. Its belief in mystical theology and the connected phenomena was due to Jewish influence, even though to the Jewish mind God was so transcendent and ineffable that He could not deal with creatures except through angelic mediation. God is the nameless and supra-essential One, above goodness itself; and the goal as indicated by Christian thought was to return to God, who is the consummation of all things. Out of the Roman Catholic Church was born Protestant mysticism. The most important of the other influences that gave it a new direction is the 'New Testament' which invaded the minds of people as the master model of all religious experience. The

'Theologia Germanica' and the 'Imitation of Christianity' appealed to the serious seekers of inward religion.

The beginnings of mysticism in Islam, according to Nicholson, take us back to the great ascetic movement, which arose under Christian influence during the seventh century A.D. The speculative development of the Mohammedan monotheistic idea, Christian asceticism, Mysticism, Gnosticism, Zoroastrianism, Greek and Indian philosophies, all have worked together in the production of the system.

However, Neo-Platonism exerted the greatest influence on Sufism. It stamped its influence on it through its renowned mystic and philosopher Plotinus, who was known to the sufis as "Shaikh-al-Yunāni", the Greek Preceptor; and through other exponents of the system, like Porphyry of the third century, Jamblichus of the third and fourth centuries and Proclus of the fifth century. Porphyry and Proclus were the Neo-Platonist commentators on Aristotle who had gained a prominent place in Muslim Philosophy. In Western Asia and Egypt, which were steeped in Greek mystical ideas, the sufi theosophy first took shape; and the doctrines of emanation, illumination, gnosis and ecstasy were transmitted into Sufism. The similarity between the speculations of Dhū'l-Nūn, the Egyptian, a student of Hellenistic science, and the writings of

Dionysius, leads one to the conclusion that it was Neo-Platonism that poured the mystical element into Islam. ²⁵ It also gained entry into Islamic thought through Oriental Christian mysticism that had absorbed the ideas of the Neo-Platonic school. Its ascetic and quietistic tendencies, its emphasis on self-control, self-sacrifice and immovable trust in God, all find their origin in Christianity. The very fact that the Sufis are often compared to the 'Society of Friends' or Quakers speaks for itself.

The theosophy of the gnostic philosophers who flourished between the first and third centuries A.D., had been evolved from the philosophy of Plato as well as from the religions of Iran and India. Gnosticism was introduced into Christianity, through which it exercised a great influence on Sufism. It held that man is enveloped in a variety of veils, and, as such is unable to see God, has quite forgotten God. Therefore, the Sufis conclude, man was born to forget God. He is called 'Insān', man, which is derived from the word 'nisyān', which means forgetfulness. According to Nicholson, well-known Sufis such as M'arūf Karkhi and Ibrahīm bin Adham, were under the influence of Gnostic philosophy, whose traces are clearly revealed in their thought.

25. Nicholson (L.A.): The Mystics of Islam; pp.12-13.

An intimate rapprochement between Islam and Buddhism is also revealed in various ways. The coins issued by Khushan Shah Firoz figuring the image of Buddha, the accounts of Chinese traveller Huan Tsiang of the seventh century A.D. referring to the wide sway of Buddhism in Khorāsān, Iraq, and up to the borders of Syria, the presence of Buddhist monasteries in Balkh, where a large number of Sufis resided, and the use of the rosaries by the Sufis, go to verify the fact.²⁶ Central Asia was full of Buddhist monasteries when Islam was being propagated.

The method of Sufism, as far as it is one of ethical self-culture, ascetic meditation and intellectual abstraction, owes a good deal to Buddhism. Eastern Persia and Transoxania had been under the influence of the teaching of the Buddha. The sufi conception of fanā, the passing away of individual self in Universal Being, whose exponent was the Persian mystic, Bayāzid of Diyarbakir, seems to be of Indian origin. Even though fanā and Nirvāṇa imply the passing away of individuality, the latter is supposed to be purely negative while the former is accompanied by baqā, everlasting life in God. Moreover, the passionless, intellectual serenity of the

26. *Ibid.*, pp.16-17.

Buddhist monk is altogether different from the rapture of the Sufi, who loses himself in ecstatic contemplation of the Divine Beauty. Nevertheless, the two concepts coincide with each other in so far as both involve the extinction of all passions and desires, the passing away of evil qualities and of evil actions, brought about by the development of the corresponding good qualities and actions. The Sufi theory of Fana was hence influenced by Jainism and by Perso-Indian Pantheism. ²⁷

But it is a mistake to exaggerate the foreign influence on Muslim thought and to regard Sufism as of foreign origin. As Nicholson points out "Even if Islam had been miraculously shut off from contact with foreign religion and philosophies, some form of mysticism would have arisen within it, for the seeds were already there."²⁸ The powerful influence exerted by the non-Islamic systems served as a stimulus to the mystical tendency in Islam, which in turn affected Sufism. In its initial stage, Sufism was an ascetic revolt against luxury and worldliness. Later on, owing to the influence of rationalism, scepticism and the subsequent counter-movements towards intuitive knowledge and faith, the Muslims were driven into the ranks of the mystics.

27. Ibid., pp.16-19.

28. Ibid., p.20.

The Islamic idea of the Unity of God was accepted by the Sufis as the starting point. 'God' says in the Qurān: "We are nearer to him than his own neck-vein" (50:15). And the Scripture itself asserts that "Everything is perishing (hālik) except the face of reality (Allāh)." (E.q.xxviii.28.); "Every one on the earth is passing away (fāni), but the glorious and honoured face of thy Lord abideth forever" (1.v.26.f.); "Wheresoever ye turn, there is the face of Allāh." (11.109). Moreover, the muslims assert that sufism had its rise in Mohāmmad himself. He has been, according to them, the recipient of a two-fold revelation, the one embodied in the Book and the other within his heart. The former was to be given to all, while the latter was to be transmitted to the chosen few; hence were called 'Īlm-e-Safīnā', book knowledge and Īlm-e-Sīnā, heart knowledge, which comprises the strictly esoteric and mystical teachings of the sufis. This esoteric knowledge was given to the Prophet's son-in-law, Alī. These muslims rely on the following verse to substantiate their case: "As we have sent a Prophet to you from among yourselves who reads our verses to you, purifies you, teaches you the Book and the Wisdom, and teaches you what you did not know before." "The Wisdom" in this verse is something not included in the teaching of the Book, for if it were included in the Book, it would

be redundant. But Iqbāl says, there is no evidence to suppose that the Prophet actually communicated certain esoteric doctrines to Alī or Abū Bakr. However, he admits that "It can be easily shown that in the Qurān as well as in the authenticated traditions, there are germs of sufi doctrine, which owing to the thoroughly practical genius of the Arabs, could not develop and fructify in Arabia, but which grew up into a distinct doctrine when they found favourable circumstances in alien soils." 29

The sufis quote anecdotes from the life of the Prophet and his companions, particularly Alī, to support the view that the doctrines of ecstasy and rapture originated in the days of Prophet and his companions. Indeed, the mystical tendencies manifested in them inevitably resulted in a life of detachment, poverty, and mortification. Their mode of living hence warrants that claim to a certain extent. The Prophet's simplicity, goodness, and devotion gave a deep spiritual significance to all terms of ordinary meaning. He is reported to have defined goodness or 'Ihsān' as a mode of worshipping Allāh, a complete absorption in praying to Him. "Thou shouldst pray to God", he said, "as if thou sawest Him; and if thou canst not see Him, He seest thee". It is on this definition of Ihsān that many sufis have built their

29. Iqbāl (M.): The Development of Metaphysics in Persia: pp.101-6.

theory of devotion. It indicates the Prophet's theory of spiritual good and was rightly made a starting point for spiritual theories of the sufis.

The end and aim of Sufism is God. As Iarūf Karkhi defines it, Sufism is "the grasping of realities and disappointment for what is in the hands of people." ³⁰ The Sufi loves God; his thinking, his meditation and prayer being for God alone; he is ignorant of everything save God, as he is disconnected with everything save God. In the words of Jūnayd, he is "dead to self and alive in God" ³¹ Having passed away from what belongs to himself, he persists through what belongs to God, 'severed from the world (dhalq) and connected with God Haqq) alone,' ³² as Shibli puts it. "A Sufi is singular in his being", says Hallāj; "he neither accepts anybody nor does anybody accept him." ³³

The Ultimate Ground of all existence is the One Real Being, the Ultimate Reality, God, whose hidden essence is made manifest in phenomena. "I created the creatures", says God in the Holy Tradition, "In order

30. Mir Valiuddin: The Qurānic Sufism; p.7.

31. Ibid., p.6.

32. Ibid., p.7.

33. Ibid., p.6.

that I might be known." Divine self-manifestation is a perpetual process carried out through the forms of the Universes', that constantly change and are simultaneously renewed without a moment's intermission. There is, however, no creation in time, as there never was a time when it did not exist as a whole in His Knowledge. God is both immanent, appearing in all phenomenal forms, and transcendent, being the absolute Reality over and above every appearance. The Divine Essence is unknowable except through Names and Attributes that are revealed in the Qurān. The Divine Attributes, though essentially identical, are diverse and opposed to each other and this differentiation constitutes the phenomenal world. But the whole content of God's Knowledge is revealed pre-eminently in man. The Indwelling Rational Principle (Logos); the Divine Mind, is displayed completely in the perfect Man, of which the Spirit of Mohammad, the pre-existent Reality, is the supreme type. The ardent pilgrim has only to realise this perfection in himself by following the Real and by making himself susceptible to the influence of the Real. As Nicholson rightly puts it Sufism is "the apprehension of divine realities, and Mohammedan Mystics are fond of calling themselves Ahl-al-Haqq, the followers of the Real." 34

34. Nicholson (R.A.): The Mystics of Islam; p.1.

According to Nicholson Abu hāshim (ob. 150 A.H.) was the first to bear the name of sufi, the first convent for sufis being founded at Ramla, in Palestine. Rabiā, the woman mystic enkindled mysticism with Love, the unquenchable flame. The doctrine of ecstasies and the mystical stages were said to be introduced by Dhū'l Nūn (ob. 265 A.H.). Sirri Saqāti (ob. 253 A.H.) introduced the theory of Unification. This knowledge was further developed and systematized by Jūneyd (ob. 297 A.H.), and was proclaimed by Shibli (ob. 334 A.H.), till in 360 A.H. Mansūr Hallāj asserted his identity with God. 35

Thus, the human family has tried to unfold the energies and potentialities of the human soul through a definite type of personality, the so called mystics, the seers and the sufis of the world. It is the most developed class of men who refused to be satisfied with what is worldly experience. East and the West, and in all ages, there have been such men whose only preoccupation was to strive and strive for the Highest. This quest has constituted the whole meaning of their life and has quenched their thirst for such a life. Their aims

35. Nicholson (R.A.): Selected Poems from the Divān-i-Shams-i-Tabriz; pp. xxvii-xxviii.

doctrines, and methods have been substantially the same; their experiences, which form a body of evidence curiously self-consistent and self-explanatory, provoke one to speculate on the relations of the human spirit to the unknown world that lies beyond the boundaries of sense.

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CHAPTER IV.

MYSTICAL EXPERIENCE.

1. Man is not merely a biological entity. At its highest his life is raised to the consciousness of an ideal, in the light of which he may explore the immensities of eternity. He has explored the inner recesses of his consciousness, worked upon it, and has transformed it in such a way that a new point of contact between him and his ideal is effected. The consciousness that achieves this end is the mystic consciousness and the ideal realized is the Divine that is revealed personally, creating a sense of the enchantment of his own personality.

The ordinary consciousness is comprised of three planes, the plane of physical sensations, the plane of images and the plane of intellect with its faculty of concepts and abstract thinking. The whole structure, with its attendant desires, emotions, and volitions, is the sensory-intellectual consciousness.

This sensory-intellectual consciousness is just a special type of consciousness, quite different from the other potential forms of consciousness that lie about it.¹ These potential forms of consciousness are

1. James (William): The Varieties of Religious Experience; p.388.

encountered at the subliminal level that lies below the threshold of consciousness which, however, does not recognise their experiences as its own.

The shadowy region, the Unconscious, includes in itself those parts and qualities of the self that are forced out of the stream of consciousness. Both the best and the worst parts of the human soul, its uncivilised instincts and vices as well as its most spiritual intuitions, are found in this region, sending their messages to the conscious field in disguised form. The mystic consciousness or the transcendental consciousness also lies there.

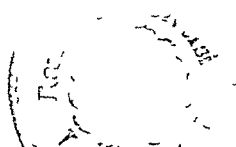
Lying in the Unconscious the transcendental consciousness gains enormous strength, as it develops unchecked, combining with itself great emotional and volitional power. From the depth of the psyche it emerges and rushes into the conscious field, breaking the cordons of the surface consciousness and thereby opening the door to reality. The nobility of his threshold of consciousness keeps the mystic always at the disposal of the subliminal powers that occupy the mental field at the touch of the proper stimulus. The hidden self in this subliminal life is the primary agent of his mystical life.

The transcendental consciousness which is deeper

than the sum total of man's conscious feeling, thought and will is the centre of the soul which ceaselessly strives to rise to the infinity of God. Its emergence is the new birth which transmutes and remakes the total personality in the interest of the spiritual self. This spiritual self belongs to eternity and meets the demands of eternity. It is the point of contact between man's life and the divine life; it is the spark of the soul, the point at which it touches reality. "It is", says J.A. Stewart "in Transcendental Feeling manifested normally as Faith in the Value of Life, and ecstatically as sense of Timeless Being, and not in Thought, proceeding by way of speculative construction that Consciousness comes nearest to the object of metaphysics, Ultimate Reality."² It is the basis on which the whole mystic claims of possible union with reality rests. Plato recognised it as that consciousness which apprehends the world of Ideas, Plotinus called it Another Intellect, different from that which reasons.

Being destitute of all sensation and thought, the transcendental consciousness is wholly incommensurable with the sensory intellectual consciousness. The

2. As quoted by Underhill in "Mysticism"; p.54.



emergence of this consciousness from deep levels and its conversion of man's whole character makes him revolve around a new centre of life. The transcendental consciousness is the cosmic consciousness that perceives the universe as a cosmos. The perception is accompanied by an intellectual enlightenment and a quickening of the moral sense with its attendant state of moral exaltation, an indescribable feeling of elevation and joyousness. More striking than these is a consciousness of eternal life, a sense of immortality that dawns upon the subject. "Cosmic consciousness", says Dr. R.M. Bucke, "in its more striking instances is not simply an expansion or extension of the self-conscious mind with which we are all familiar, but the super addition of a function as distinct from any possessed by the average man as self-consciousness is distinct from any function possessed by one of the higher animals." ³ The mystic is quiet and receptive, so that contact with the cosmic life is obtained and the Transcendental Reality surges in on him. "The best and the noblest way in which thou mayst come into this Life", says Eckhart, "is by keeping silence, and letting God work and speak." ⁴

3. James (William): The Varieties of Religious Experience; p.396.

4. As quoted by Underhill in Mysticism ; p.64.

The transcendental consciousness can be brought within the area of consciousness by a deliberate inattention to the messages of the senses, which process results in the total suppression of the whole empirical content of mind. The surface consciousness is deliberately lulled so that a new kind of consciousness takes its place. In so far as it dominates the self temporarily the subject is thrown in the wonderland of ecstasy but it may take hold of him permanently, as in the Unitive life. This is achieved by the practice of self-hypnotism, such as fixing the eye on a nearby object, concentrating on the stream of one's own breath, and repeating in one's own mind some short formula of words over and over again till they become meaningless and till even the monotonous sound image disappears. All the elements of sensation, sensuous imagery and conceptual thought, as well as the emotional and volitional states which accompany them — in fact, the entire multiplicity of the empirical contents of the mind — are forced out. What then supervenes is not unconsciousness, but a new kind of non-sensuous, non-conceptual consciousness.

Stace holds that the mystic consciousness is not the consciousness of anything, and yet, he says, it is consciousness. It is not consciousness of anything, for

it has no objects, not even itself, as an object to itself. It is the Pure Consciousness, the Undifferentiated Unity. It is not even the consciousness of consciousness, for this duality is incompatible with the idea of an Undifferentiated Unity.⁵ This consciousness is positive and negative, something and nothing, a fullness and an emptiness at the same time. In so far as it is said to be pure peace, beatitude, joy, bliss, it has a positive tone. But in so far as it is empty of all objects and contents of the mind it is sheer emptiness.⁶ Thus, in mysticism it is the unconscious/ mind or the sub-conscious part of it that is more important than the ego part. The super-mind becomes conscious in the ego-form in the mystic-consciousness.

In our attempt to penetrate into this consciousness we must begin to discover the goal that the mystic proposes to himself, for it is a clear understanding of his goal, and not his adventures on the path, that will make us a better judge of him. The quest of idealit;, as any other quest, is caused by a conative movement of interest, even though the intellectual aspect of consciousness may be of great assistance. Conation is wilful

5. Stace (N.T.): The Teachings of the Mystics; p.22.

6. *Ibid*, p.22.

action and wilful action of every kind results from interest. Interest involves feeling which supplies the motive power to the will without which it would remain dormant. Determination and desire therefore constitute the aspiring force that creates in us the dynamic impulse to act. Thought alone cannot penetrate into reality, nor do we seek it so long as it has not touched some aspect of our emotional life.

The desire for perfect love sets the determination of the mystic upon Transcendental Reality, the supersensual object of his quest being the source of a strong emotional attraction to him. The will to attain communion with the Transcendental object is born of his burning desire, and besides the craving for the possession of the desired object there is a longing to know the desired object. The desire for perfect knowledge is a part of the desire for perfect love, and by following his own love the mystic is following the most natural trend of his own nature.

The movement of the mystic consciousness toward the Absolute is an ordered movement rather than a sudden, overwhelming vision of truth. This movement to higher levels of consciousness is a psychological process, a preparation of the self to that spiritual experience.

wherein the soul makes an entrance into union with the Absolute, the Absolute that is the substance and the underlying reality of all that exists. The seeker may look upon his quest as an outgoing journey from the world of illusion to the real, or he may look upon it as an inward retreat, an inward alteration, which abolishes the disharmony in his personality. It is the divine life within man's spirit itself that sets man on the homeward journey to the eternal life. Reality seeks him and man cannot evade its attraction; at its touch the self is compelled to its will.

The classification of the phases of the mystical life can only be a rough sketch. The spiritual life is spontaneous and original and, as such, evades all analysis and expression. The phases of the mystical life, however, may be said to obey the following classification.

1. The self awakes to consciousness of divine reality. This awakening is accompanied by joy and an intense feeling of exaltation. Being the necessary beginning of any process of transcendence, it shifts the equilibrium of the self from lower to higher levels, with a consequent change in the object of interest brought in view. The individual consciousness becomes swallowed up in the larger world-consciousness which presses upon the individual suddenly as a great new revelation. This is

accompanied by an abrupt or gradual emergence of intuitions from below the threshold. There arises also an acute realisation of reality at the heart of things.

2. The consciousness of Divine Reality awakens the self to its own finiteness and imperfection, and to the illusions that separate it from the Divine Reality. Through discipline and mortification, constituting purgation, the self seeks to get rid of all its imperfection. This is the first step upon the road to perfect union with the Absolute. The urge of the self to put itself the character of Reality begins with the stripping off of self-love and the false interests of the surface consciousness. This is Purgation. Purgation can be studied under its two aspects -- the negative and the positive. In its negative aspect purgation means casting away the unreal and imperfect things from the self, which process is accomplished by Poverty or Detachment. This means an utter self-stripping, the casting away of wealth, both material and immaterial, a complete detachment from all finite things. It involves the cleansing of the soul from all personal desire, the abnegation of self-love and mortification of the will. The relation of the self to the external world is poisoned by lust and desire; detachment demolishes all ownership, making the self a

part of the cosmos, a bit of the Universal life, and all at once the cosmos belongs to the self and the self to the cosmos.

In its positive aspect, purification means raising the pure elements of character to their heights. This is accomplished by a deliberate and painful course of mortification. The process of mortification sets up new paths so that the mystical life expresses itself in action. It means a complete sublimation of personality wherein all the energy of the self abandons its old path and concentrates itself on the new objectives of the transcendental life. The animal impulses are withdrawn from their outward aims and are interpenetrated with one another in such a way that a unique feeling of wholeness or transcendence supervenes. This change of life from the old to the new is not an easy course. It is a period of great activity. The inharmonious elements of self collide with its pure and permanent elements which results in bitter suffering and manifold disappointments. The process is an education that directs the human nature towards an adjustment with this new life.

3. Now that the self is purified from the influence of the world of sense, it is heading towards the acquisition of those virtues that bring with them the joyful

consciousness of the Divine presence. This is illumination, a state of happiness. This state of happiness also involves a training. "All pleasurable and exalted states of mystic consciousness in which the sense of I-hood persists, in which there is a loving and joyous relation between the Absolute as object and the self as subject, fall under the head of illumination: which is really an enormous development of the intuitional life at high levels."⁷ This apprehension of the Absolute is, however, different from the unique consciousness of union with it, for here the self still realises itself as a separate entity.

This clarity of vision is extended to the dual apprehension of reality, reality as transcendent and reality as immanent in the phenomenal world. The heightened perception endows all natural things with an added significance and reality. The activity of the growing subconscious powers increases the energy of the transcendental self. This increased energy captures the ordinary channels of expression and may show itself in such forms as auditions, visions and automatic writing, which are the symbolic expression of the sub-conscious activity of the spiritual self. They are an outward form of real

7. Underhill (Lucy): Mysticism; p.234.

experience, a contact between the visionary and a transcendental beauty and truth.

4. Soon the state of illumination breaks up. The joyful consciousness of the Absolute is followed by the final and complete purification of the self which is called the 'Mystic Pain', or 'Dark Night of the Soul'. The consciousness that had been illumined by a sense of Divine presence now suffers from a sense of Divine absence. The soul seems abandoned by the Divine. It now surrenders itself, its individuality and will, completely. It is utterly passive, desiring nothing and seeking nothing. Having passed through the Dark Night it is cleansed to the very centre of I-hood; the will abandons the desire for personal happiness.

The Dark Night shows itself as an overwhelming sense of darkness and deprivation, so intense that the whole self plunges into the state of negation and misery. From the psycho-logical point of view it is the period of fatigue and rest following the period of exhaustion due to continued mystical activity. The seizure of the centres of consciousness in the interests of the transcendental life, the continuous strain of a development illumined life, throws the mind, as it were of necessity, back into the negative state. In this state the mystic

has to face trials of every kind; he loses grasp of his spiritual life as well as of worldly life. The disharmony between the self and the world throws him in an intricate atmosphere of falsehood and illusion; his health as well as his intellectual life suffer a set back. In its movement towards higher levels of reality the self discards its old state of equilibrium in the interest of a new state of consciousness and this disharmony leaves it in a period of chaos, where it loses its apprehensions of the transcendental world. This state of misery lasts till the consciousness unifies itself again. The sense of absence of the Absolute and the sense of self's weakness and imperfection provokes the mystic to action which in turn produces mystical energy. This transmutation of the whole man, the result of total self-abandonment, is the essential preparation for the unitive life, the true goal of the mystic-quest.

5. Union is the end towards which all the previous oscillations of consciousness lead. The self is one with the Absolute and has reached a state of equilibrium of purely spiritual life. This permanent establishment of life upon transcendental levels of reality is further characterised by peaceful joy and is described by the mystic under various names, such as 'mystical

marriage' and 'deification'. It is the rapturous consummation of the mystic's love followed by a recognition of a profound change effected in his own personality. It is a state of complete absorption in the Infinite, a consciousness of sharing its strength and its authority.

II. The condition in which all the barriers are removed between the Absolute and the soul which finds and feels It above all reason and above all knowledge, is the true mystical experience. Even though in its early stages the soul finds the Absolute in opposition to itself, it tends to abolish this opposition when it finds itself possessed by It. "The mystic experience" says deCejac, "ends with the words, I live, yet not I, but God in me." ⁸ In this state the mystic has the vision or consciousness of absolute perfection, coupled with the consequent inward transmutation. It is the impulse in him for moral perfection that leads him to this spiritual transcendence.

Rising from an attitude of love and devotion, he achieves an identity consciousness which is the highest phase of self-assertion. He has freed himself from all fluctuations and has acquired sobriety and serenity. He

8. As quoted by Underhill in "Mysticism"; p. 62.

has reached the highest phase of mystic consciousness in the meditation of self as pure, eternal and absolute, and has emerged with a new self-affirmation, 'I am the eternal consciousness'. The self has passed into that which it has sought by the thorough renunciation of self-assertion, of the sense of its own or any other separable existence, for existence is bound by the limits of space and time. Annihilation is the supreme fulfilment.

Mystical experience is a personal experience. It is an independent functioning of the human mind that has outstripped all tradition. Being the reaction of the whole man to the whole reality, it unifies all values so that the desired object is sought by the totality of one's faculties and energies. It is an integral, undivided consciousness, in which man's being seems to find itself. He dwells in a sense of timeless being wherein all feelings and ideas are fused and all distinctions are transcended. Thought and reality, subject and object, merge into one another and the individual self is invaded by a universal self which the individual feels as his own. ⁹

The experience is strangely self-sufficient and complete and as such it need not be verified by something

9. Radhakrishnan (c.): An Idealist View of Life; p.92.

beyond itself. It is its own cause and explanation. "It is self-established (svatahsiddha) self-evidencing (svacanvedya), self-luminous (svayam prakāśa)."¹⁰ Logical knowledge is only a partial manifestation of it. With its persistent distinction between the knowledge of a thing and its being, logical knowledge stands in sharp contrast with intuition, which is first hand knowledge.

The experience possesses the character of revelation. As it is beyond the control and command of the individual will, its apprehension is beyond the mode of the understanding of the normal. The real confronts the knower rather than carved out of the resources of his own mind. The immediate and intuitive certainty accompanying it transcends all rational criticism, doubt and disbelief.¹¹

Iqbāl gives five characteristics of mystical experience.

1. The experience is an immediate experience and, as such, resembles perception. This simply means that we know God just as we know other objects, for God is neither a mathematical entity nor a system of concepts

10. Ibid, p.92.

11. Ibid, p.95.

having no reference to experience. As Al-Ghazālī says, it is "like an immediate perception, as if one touched its object with one's hand."¹² It, however, differs from perception, in so far as sensation does not play any part in it. Again, unlike intuition, which is the direct apprehension of the whole, perception grasps reality piecemeal. Therefore, knowledge gained through perception is always incomplete.¹³

2. The experience is an unanalysable whole. Thought, that takes reality piecemeal, is reduced to a minimum. The mystic experience brings before us the total passage of reality as a single, unanalysable unity in which the ordinary distinction of subject and object does not exist. As such it is synoptic and intuitive rather than analytical and discursive. It is not a process of attaching predicates to a subject, but is a knowledge of the subject of predicates.

3. This unanalysable whole is revealed as a "Unique Self."¹⁴ The Unique Self is a Person, transcending the self of the mystic, yet immanent, for the mystic has a

12. Underhill (Avelyn): Mysticism; p.50.

13. Inver (Ishrat Hasan): The Metaphysics of Iqbal; pp.16-7.

14. Ibid, p.20.

consciousness of perfect unity with it. The mystic state is, therefore, a moment of intimate communion with this unique other self, transcending, encompassing, and momentarily suppressing the private personality of the subject of the experience. It is far from being a mere retirement into the mists of pure subjectivity. It is highly objective. "As pure water poured into pure water remains the same, thus, O Gautama, is the Self of a thinker who knows. Water in water, fire in fire, ether in ether, no one can distinguish them; likewise a man whose mind has entered into the self attains liberty." 15

4. Being just what it is, the experience defies all definition and expression. It is incommunicable, since it is to be directly experienced. Being more like feeling than thought, the content of the mystic consciousness cannot be transmitted. Knowledge gained by thought can be communicated to others because thought grasps its objects through concepts or universals. Intuition transcends all words, concepts and categories and hence it cannot be made common property. It need not be thought, however, that the mystic descends into his own subjectivity in this act of experience. His experience is objective

15. Katha-Upanisad; II, 4 valli, 15; and Maitrāyana-Brahmana-Upanisad; VI Prapathaka, Muller translations.

and the object of his experience is real and existential.¹⁶

But the mystic feeling also has a cognitive element, and as such seeks expression in thought, and tends to the form of idea. In other words, mystical feeling implies an objective. Feeling and idea are the two non-temporal and temporal aspects of the same inner experience.¹⁷

5. The mystic's close association with the eternal gives him a sense of the unreality of serial time. He beholds eternity in a single moment. Time, therefore, does not exist for him. It is unreal. This, however, does not mean a complete break with serial time, for the mystic state is related to common experience in the sense that the mystic returns to the normal levels of experience.¹⁸

According to William James, mystical experience has four distinguishing marks.¹⁹

1. Ineffability: The experience is ineffable because it resembles states of feeling rather than states of intellect. It cannot be readily translated into conceptual terms. Even though inarticulate it is positive.

16. Enver (Ishrat Hasan): The Metaphysics of Iqbāl, pp.18-9.

17. Iqbāl (H.): Reconstruction of religious thought in Islam, pp.21-22.

18. Ibid, p.23.

19. James (William): The Varieties of Religious Experience, pp.380-81.

2. Noetic quality: Even though similar to states of feeling, the experience seems to be states of knowledge. They are states of insight, illuminations and revelations, carrying with themselves their own authority as regards the depth of truth revealed by the discursive intellect.

3. Transiency: Mystical states are transient, their quality being only imperfectly reproduced in memory. They can, however, be recognised on their recurrence and are susceptible to continuous development.

4. Passivity: The mystic in this state feels as if his own will were in abeyance; as if he were under the spell of some superior power. This state is accompanied by certain definite secondary phenomena such as prophetic speech, automatic writing and the mediumistic trance.

"The simplest rudiment of mystical experience", says James, "would seem to be that deepened sense of the significance of a maxim or formula which occasionally sweeps over one."²⁰ This sense of deeper significance can be aroused even by single words, musical sounds and the like, when the mind is set aright. These sudden invasions of reminiscent consciousness, 'Dreamy States' as Sir James Grichton-Brown calls them, bring with them a

20. Ibid, p.382.

sense of mystery and the feeling of an enlargement of perception.

The mystic is an initiate, one to whom is granted a view of the Divine. His revelation is not a private truth, nor does it claim any novelty, for it is rather the rediscovery of the eternal than the discovery of the new.²¹ The object of his quest is God, an object of love, who is known directly through the faculty of intuition. "Intuition", observes Kanade, "is a faculty of supersensuous experience which is aroused in us by proper spiritual initiation and practice."²² It is concerned with central initiation. Transcending intellect, feeling, and will, the intuitional process generates the experience that is called mystical. In so far as it has a central initiation it has a physiological support, but the element of supersensuousness makes the experience different from our normal experience, connected with our sensuous nature. The mystical experience, thus, involves intuition, supersensuousness and central initiation.²³

The experience is continuous. It is attended by a process of growth. The process of growth involved in

21. Bennet (Charles A.): A Philosophical Study of Mysticism; p.74.

22. Kanade (R.D.): Pathway to God in Kannada Literature; pp.2-3.

23. Ibid, p.3.

it results in asymptotic approximation to Reality.²⁴ The experience fulfils the conditions of universality, objectivity, necessity, and validity and is, therefore, real. Further, Beatification constitutes the ultimate end of the experience. The enjoyment of perfect bliss is the ideal aimed at by all the mystics.

The experience is universal and divine. Ranade observes that it is wrong to suppose that there is a difference between the quality of God-realisation of different mystics, for man everywhere is endowed with the same 'deiform faculty' that has enabled him to see God face to face. In spite of the fact that mystical experiences bear the stamp of the prevailing culture and metaphysics and above all the temperament and symbolising capacity of the individual mystic, they have the same teaching, about the Name of God, the fire of devotion, and the nature of self realisation.²⁵ The variety of mystical experience only reveals the spiritual richness of humanity.

In its intellectual aspect the "mystical life involves a full exercise of the intellect, feeling, and will."²⁶ A powerful imagination and an absolute clarity

24. Ibid, p.4.

25. Ranade (R.D.): Mysticism in Maharashtra; pp.24-25.

26. Ibid, p.25.

of thought are essential to lead a true mystical life, for a confused mind cannot hope to rise to the level of the highest mystical experience.

The experience involves finer emotions, all turned to the experience of God. The mystical life is, therefore, emotional also, but the emotions are kept under control. It also involves a definite moral development of the individual and the society. The mystic has to lead a moral life, that will do good to the society.

In its intuitional aspect, however, we find the surest criterion of the validity of the experience. Being true to himself and to mankind, the mystic regards his advancement in the mystical life as a step towards the realisation of these ends. The first hand intuition of God is the greatest criterion; the mystic himself is ultimately the final judge of himself.

Thus, Reality, that is infinite, is reached by eternal perfect knowledge alone. Intelligence, devotion and morality are required for its attainment. Endowed with intense devotion, the seeker progresses in his moral and religious efforts, till he reaches the goal of realisation.

The object of spiritual experience, says observer, is unique, novel and attractive, and paradoxically

enough, both a source of joy and fear. This peculiar mingling of opposite emotions attends mystical experience. The experience creates a sense of creature — consciousness, awakening the self to its finitude, and vitalises the whole being of man. As the concentration increases the object gains added brightness and distinctness.

It is, further, non-spatial and non-temporal. Defying the logical law of contradiction, it presents the contradictions as necessary elements of a self-identical life. It, in fact, manifests itself by means of contradictions. Change and motion are not incompatible with spiritual experience²⁷, for the object can be both moving as well as steady. The visions and voices are the work of God, and have a purely ontological value.²⁸ The Nyaya theory of Divine perception and the Kevala jnana of the Jainas, for instance, reveal this characteristic.

But Stace holds that we have to exclude visions, voices, telepathy, pre-cognition and the like phenomena from the category of the mystical, for whenever one sees

27. Datta (D.N.): The Yoga of the Saints; p.158.

28. Ibid, p.166.

a vision what one sees has shape, size and colour. These are images and sensations, and are components of the surface consciousness. The same is the case with voices. Similarly, the conceptual elements are to be excluded from the mystical consciousness. Not that the thoughts in this level of consciousness are different from those we are accustomed to, but that it does not include any thought at all. The elements of surface consciousness are not present in it. This is the reason why mystical experiences are ineffable. All words, being the products of the empirical level of consciousness, express the elements of the empirical level of consciousness only.²⁹ It is like the Turiya state called the superconscious, in which one has no distinct cognition of anything, internal or external. This Dreamless sleep is utter darkness, the Unconscious. But unlike the Freudian Unconscious, which is the storehouse of morbid repressed wishes, it expresses the deepest states of consciousness leading to the pure state of self. Nevertheless, the mystical consciousness is not miraculous or supernatural, for it also is the product of the natural process of evolution and discipline.³⁰

The sympathetic nervous system, the viscera and the smooth muscle tissues are all involved in the mystical

29. Stace (W.T.): The Teachings of the Mystics; p.13.

30. Ibid, p.14.

experience. It also depends on the responses of unstriped muscles and glands, the muscles of the arterial walls that determine blood-pressure and the smooth muscular tissues. As a result, the mystic develops certain physical characteristics which are peculiar to him, such as thrills up the spine, sudden shivers, vibrations of the entire body, tingling of the skin, a glow of warmth, deep breathing and slow pulse. The experience, thus, induces profound changes in sensitivity. Appeals are made to kinaesthetic and organic senses to awaken mystical feeling, by various physical exercises that lead to deep breathing, movements of the chest, diaphragm and abdomen. Even incenses, flowers and scents are used to the same effect. An appropriate bodily posture has been the source of many of the deepest insights. Repetition of single words or formulae also releases extra-sensory experiences by arousing an intense one-pointedness of feeling, thought and will.³¹ Thus endowed with a different sense of relationship between the body and the world, the mystic sees, hears and smells intuitively with the senses of the mind, his sensations having been completely transformed. In this way, the hypnotic method

31. Mukerjee (Radhakamal): The Theory and Art of Yoga; pp.26-27.

has exercised important and beneficial effects on the function of the nervous system. Applied in a right way, the method leads to an expansion of the faculties of the mind.

The nervous system is a system of interwoven threads, of physical and mental pattern, the physical and mental occurrences being parallel to each other. The sets of the reactions of the brain and the sets of dispositions of the mind are, as such, different aspects of the same process. The responses of this system as a whole to the cosmos give rise to man's basic sense of unity, wholeness, and transcendence, of beauty and harmony.

That there is no clear cut boundary between one mind and another at the unconscious level is indicated by psychic phenomena such as telepathy. Nor is the human self an indivisible entity, as every individual self is susceptible to dissociation or alteration to some degree. The biological and the social self of man do not constitute his complete self. Through creative intuition and imagination, he has sought to step beyond the ranges of the normally conscious mind, as the senses and the intellect do not reveal the whole reality. This endeavour to achieve an adjustment with the total-reality has opened the possibility of extra-sensory perception.

The human mind is a complex series of interwoven mental events, both conscious and sub-conscious or unconscious. Extra-sensory perception is unconscious. However, its content is converted into one of the mechanisms of common experience such as dreams, intuition and the like. Man cannot be aware of ESP just as he becomes aware of common experience; nor does he experience any modality of sensory experience in ESP. ESP is independent of space and time. ³²

The PSI capacity is the most efficient and most specialised mode of human adjustment to the whole reality, ³³ and every individual self seems to be endowed with this capacity. Even though rooted in the unconscious, it does not belong to its repressed, morbid and unhealthy phase. It may be considered as a special type of mystical or yogic intuition that leads the human mind towards unity and transcendence. It is a special type of mystical concord with the cosmos.

The mystic discipline epitomises concrete contacts in attitudes and links up the different attitudes.

32. Mukerjee (Radhakamal): Yoga and PSI experience; paper read at the Seminar on Yoga and Para-psychology, held on 21st and 22nd December, 1962, p.59.

33. Ibid, pp.58-59.

There is a quick succession of these attitudes, and the field of consciousness presents a unity, instead of being split up into manifold experiences. No inhibition or mental rivalry of attitudes is involved in such an unitary field of consciousness. As such, it consists not of any particular attitude, but of a fusion of all attitudes that are devoid of all concrete contents, and hence of concrete experiences. It contains the meaning of the whole conscious life. It is a fusion in which no attitude completely effaces itself.

This harmony of the attitudes of feeling, thought, and action gives rise to a clarity of vision, a clearness of understanding that cannot be elaborated into subjects and predicates. As a result, wordless and imageless thought comprises the whole range of man's experience, conveying the fullness of meaning.³⁴ The mystical consciousness consists in obliteration of space, time, sensation, and other factors of experience, which belong to self. As the conditions of ordinary consciousness are suppressed, the sense of an underlying consciousness acquires intensity. At last nothing remains but a pure, absolute, abstract self. When the ego-side of the pure mind is freed from the disturbances of the sensory and

34. Mukerjee (Madhakamal): The Theory and Art of Mysticism; p.200.

organic process through the process of concentration, the omniscient pure mind operates. It explores the transcendental plane, which is not bound to the spatio-temporal system of relations.

In spite of much formal agreement, mystical experience is capable of great diversity, in its attitude towards the object, the path to its attainment, and in the fundamental attitude of the mystic himself. There are two types of mystical experience, closely linked together, the Introvertive mystical experience, and the Extrovertive mystical experience — the Inward way, and the way of Unity, as Otto calls them.³⁵ The Inward way is the way that leads inward, withdrawing the self from all outward things, with the consequent retreat into the ground of one's soul, where God abides. This is the better world, where the most glorious life awaits the seeker. The road leading to it is Intuition, Intuition that illumines him with self-knowledge as well.

The Outward way or the way of the Unifying vision, gazes upon the world of multiplicity, from which the seeker jumps to an 'Intuition' or a Knowledge of its own kind. It bestows upon the individual the strange glimpses

35. Otto (Rudolph): Mysticism East and West; pp.40-41.

into the eternal relationship of all things, the unity of being. The apprehension, being filled with value and awe, brings with itself a liberation and blessedness. Things and events are no longer multiple and separate, but are a whole One. Within this One all otherness as opposition disappears. The perception of this identity of all things results in an identification of the perceiver with the perceived. Thus unified with the one, he sees all things in himself, or rather, as himself. The objects are transfigured in such a manner that the unity shines through them. This One itself is the object of intuition — as that which is superior and prior to the many. The many is the changing modes of the One.

The extrovertive experience is sensory intellectual in so far as it still perceives physical objects, but is non-sensuous and non-intellectual in so far as it perceives them as 'all one'. The world is transfigured and unified in one ultimate Being. If this Ultimate Being is identified with God, then this type of experience tends towards Pantheism.

Radhakamal Mukerjee gives four types of mystical experiences. ³⁶ In Fervent mysticism God appears in

36. Mukerjee (Radhakamal): The Theory and Art of Mysticism; pp.5-6.

a concrete human pattern. The experience yields intense emotional satisfaction. It yields a state of rapture in which the subject can hardly distinguish between his apprehension of union with God and his sensual delight. The schools of Hindu Bhakti, Persian Sufi, Chinese, Japanese, and Christian mysticism are all experiences of this type.

Cosmic or Nature mysticism is characterized by a sense of wholeness. As against the excited states of feeling produced by the mystic's communion with a personal God, this type of mysticism yields a deep emotional satisfaction at the disappearance of the sense of separateness. The soul merges into the All-Being, instead of the personal deity, by breaking down all relativities. The finite loses itself in the infinite and all that remains is the cosmic feeling.

In cool unimpassioned mysticism the mystic apprehends a modeless Absolute, an Absolute that is the substance of the world, life and mind. In this apprehension the contrast between the knowing subject and the known object is lost. Instead of the personal God of emotional mysticism, the Atman, the Brahman or the Tao is cherished by the soul. Then there is another type of mysticism, in which the quest of the soul, the way of

knowledge, and the way of love are all combined. Upanisadic, Vedantic and Taoist mysticism are examples of this type.

However, the difference between the relation of soul to God as an immanent principle, and God as transcendent is concerned not only with the relationship of the worshipper to the object of worship, but also with the inherent difference in character of the object of worship itself. The distinction is 'not that the mystic has another and a new relationship to God, but that he has a different God.' ³⁷ Mysticism is the life lived in the knowledge of God who is Himself mystical.

But, according to Stace, Mysticism is not a religious phenomenon at all. ³⁸ The connection between the two is far from being direct and immediate; it is subsequent and even adventitious, for there is nothing religious about the Undifferentiated Unity. The experience of the Undifferentiated Unity is, in fact, the mystical experience, although it is interpreted as 'Union with God'. In Patanjali's Isvara pranidhana, for instance, devotion to God is just an accessory and accidental matter. The experience of 'melting away' or 'fading away'

37. Otto (Rudolph): Mysticism East and West; p.140.

38. Stace (W.T.): The Teachings of the Mystics; p.23.

into the Infinite is an actual experience. In theistic cultures this Infinite is God. Hence the mystical experience is the experience of God. It is also the experience of God because it is beyond space and time. In other words, it is eternal; and the Eternal, like the Infinite, is another name for God. Thirdly, the feeling of an exalted peace, blessedness and joy are identified with the peace of God, the Gateway of the Divine, and the Gateway of salvation, and so on. The emotional side of the experience of Undifferentiated Unity associates it with religion. The experience of Undifferentiated Unity itself does not make one a Christian or a Buddhist. ³⁹

Nevertheless, for many mystics, mysticism is the philosophy of God realisation. God, whom the mystic seeks, makes Himself known to him in direct presence. This means a transition from truth conventionally accepted to truth personally apprehended. The mystic enters the boundaries of another world, where he lives in God, in God's knowledge and the knowledge of himself. But he leaves this world of matter only to return to it, to translate his knowledge into terms of life, and thereby to make it more beautiful and significant. There are

39. Stace (W.T.): The Teachings of the Mystics; p.25.

thus, two phases in the complete mystical experience — the ascent into complete communion with the One, and the descent to the many, with the knowledge of oneness. In other words, the mystic alternates between God and the world. He alternates between God and the world because he perceives it as a moral requirement. One ought to ascend to the presence of God, and one ought to return to the world with the fruits of that experience. As Bernet observes, "If he is to retain what God means he must let God go, or, more accurately, he must surrender the exclusive direction of the mind upon God and establish in the world the God to find whom he left the world." ⁴⁰

The mystical experience teaches us that no man can reach the final truth for another. The mystic way is the lonely way. The faith with which he sets to work, the sufferings that he undergoes in his adventures, and the path of his self-transcendence are entirely his own. As such his is a lonely communion with the One. If we want to reach his level, we must set ourselves to work, search for the spirit of truth and see what we can get out of it.

In the mystical process the ego integrates its

40. Bernet (Charles A.): A Philosophical Study of Mysticism; p.42.

competing tendencies and develops a single inclusive attitude that results in a kind of synthetic transfiguration of his experiences. The animal impulses withdraw from their outward aims, and interpenetrate one another, leaving a unique sense of wholeness or transcendence. The intellect, the senses and the heart are stirred and reach their highest goal in mystical life. The mystic is not a mere spectator, but is a critical sifter of experience, who endeavours to eliminate all subjective elements, psychological or physiological, in the content of his experience, with a view to reaching what is absolutely objective. The final experience is a revelation, a new life process — original, essential and spontaneous.

Thus, Mysticism develops into a method of knowledge and action, which includes the mystic's adjustment to the totality of life and the world. The integration of impulses, attitudes and ideal interests results in an intuitive perception of unity. This unity is not only perceived but realised in sentiment and action.

III. The hypothesis of modern psychology that mental states are dependent upon bodily conditions, has led it to the assumption that the spiritual authority of the mystics is open to question. The great contemplatives have suffered from bad physical health; as such, their

mental states are largely an outcome of diathesis due to the perverted action of various glands. St. Paul was an epileptic, St. Teresa was an hysteric and St. Francis of Assisi was a hereditary & degenerate.

Religion is an illusion. It is the expression of suppressed desires and impulses, impulses that are rejected and that go into the unconscious. These repudiated impulses create a way of escape from the dreadful and hard reality that confronts man. It consists, according to Freud, 'of certain dogmas, assertions about facts and conditions of external (or internal) reality which tell us something that one has not oneself discovered and which claims that one should give them credence.'⁴¹ It, further, claims to be absolutistic, its truths being unalterable, unlike scientific theories that have a progressive character. Instead of proceeding from induction from facts as science does, religion starts with conclusions.

God expresses man's notion of perfect being. By His presence man has overcome the defects of the human spirit, the transiency and the uncertainty of life. Like a grown up infant he looks up to Him to supply his wants

41. Radhakrishnan (S.): An Idealist View of Life; pp. 17-18

and protect him from harm. He has fixed his attention on the thought of God in such a way that he feels that he has seen God.

Moreover, all the proofs set forth for the existence of God are unsatisfactory. The ontological argument, starts from the idea of God. God is an absolutely perfect being. Non existence would be an imperfection. Therefore God exists. But as Kant showed, existence is not a predicate like goodness. God's existence cannot be deduced from the conception of God, for it may be one of the many things that exist only in our imagination. The causal argument also is not satisfactory. The argument holds the causal concept to be valid, but it also holds that we can have a first cause that is an exception to the law of succession. This first cause is God. But is it not possible to have an infinite series of causes and effects? Moreover, if God is infinite, eternal and necessary, why should the world not be the same? The argument from design starts with the purpose of human life. But in the light of the theory of biological evolution it is difficult to accept the assumption. There does not seem to be any purpose for the Universe to realise. Even if there were such a purpose directing the universe we cannot from this infer the existence of a purposive mind.

Thus, with no argument to prove the existence of God one is led to assert that there may be no God. By postulating His existence man has held him responsible for the government of the universe and has shunned all ethical striving. Under its influence he has sought to flee the world rather than seek it. He has, in fact, explained away the difficulties of life as delusions of the mind.⁴²

The mystic is quite the victim of circumstances with no voluntary attention on his part and hence no motive whatever. He is the victim of radical instability; as such, he lacks the power of making decisions. Being completely under the influence of his impulses he is constantly torn between conflicting temptations, between abstinence and self-indulgence. In one word, life has become intolerable to him, with its crowding demands and difficulties. From this chaos he has sought to achieve relief through the mystic discipline. He has sought to achieve peace of mind through the integration of the competing tendencies by being absorbed in the thought of God and His will. What does this absorption mean? It means that in order to win relief from his trouble the mystic impoverishes his mind until only one idea or feeling is left through a subjective state.

42. Ibid, p.41.

In short, mysticism is the outcome of regression, maladaptation that results in the retreat of the psyche to an earlier phase. In one word, it is the result of introversion, a reluctance to confront reality. If at all religion is adopted, it is because of its practical efficiency. It supplies an emotional stimulus to keep men loyal and to carry on the social organisation. Nevertheless, man will divest himself of it as he advances in psychological development.

The prevailing psychological interest in religion, as it is seen, has resulted in the temptation to judge mysticism by externals. Now, to begin with the medical point of view that regards mystic as a patient, the comparison is highly misleading. How do the bodily conditions of the mystic decide the spiritual significance of his mental states? Even the mental states of the so-called normal men are as organically conditioned as religious emotions are. "So of all our raptures and our drynesses", says James, "our longings and pantings, our questions and beliefs. They are equally organically founded, be they of religious or non-religious content."⁴³ Moreover, we have never sought to explain scientific theories, the

43. James (William): The Varieties of Religious Experience; p. 14.

industrial arts, and the like, by referring to their creators' neurotic constitution. They have been tested by logic and experiment instead. Why should this not be true of the mystical states as well? In fact, as James observes, "Immediate luminousness, philosophical reasonableness, and moral helpfulness are the only available criteria."⁴⁴ As such, we shall know them by their fruits. Again, the mystic may be neurotic, but so long as his revelations have stood the test of time, it is highly infamous to condemn them as the fruits of diseases.

Iqbāl admits that it is not true that all mental states are organically determined, because "the scientific form of mind is as much organically determined as the religious."⁴⁵ To say that mystical experiences are abnormal or neurotic does not prove that they are worthless. Firstly, they are not abnormal because they reveal objective reality, they have a cognitive content. Secondly, even if they were abnormal, they are the experiences of truth. That is the reason why they have "the capacity to centralise the forces of the ego, and thereby to endow him with a new personality."⁴⁶

44. Ibid, p.18.

45. Laver (Ishrat Hasan): The Metaphysics of Iqbāl; pp.22-3.

46. Ibid, p.23.

Therefore, the physical conditions of the mystic does not discredit the sanity of his teachings. If he has suffered from an unstable nervous condition, it is because his body cannot support the strains of the mystical activity.⁴⁷ Moreover, what right have we to say that a neuro-path can never be a revealer of new truths? For particular kinds of experiences particular kinds of temperaments are necessary. It can be found that when a superior intellect is combined with such a temperament, it gives rise to an effective genius, a genius that has the requisite condition for receiving inspiration from beyond, and the tendency to act accordingly.

The mystic should not be compared with the hysteric patient, on the ground that he is also under the domination of one fixed idea or intuition which rules his whole consciousness. There is a difference between the two; and the difference is this: the idea in the hysteric patient is trivial and morbid, while that of the mystic is a great one. It is nothing less than the Transcendental Reality, God, the being who envelops his whole being and centralises it upon Himself. His idea is not an obsession.⁴⁸

47. Underhill (Evelyn): Mysticism; p.61.

48. Ibid, p.60.

The attack of the psycho-analytical school on religion as an outcome of an infantile projection of consciousness is unsatisfactory because it derives its material from morbid, immature and pathological cases. It is highly questionable and unscientific to emphasise certain pathological tendencies and derive a theory therefrom. Jung's insight is truer than Freud's, for he regards the Unconscious as the reservoir of both the worst and the best in man. It is, as such, a potential source of revelation of his highest spiritual flights as well. The impulses from this region rushing to the conscious field show that there are so many ways of response to reality.

Further, psychology has not investigated the mystic consciousness at all. It has not even understood the psychology of genius. The experience of genius also, as that of the mystic, may appear to be abnormal to the psychologist. Such experiences show that there are levels of experience other than the so-called normal, quite sound in their own sphere, but demanding or anic conditions quite different from the normal. Every condition differing from the normal need not be an abnormal condition. Now that the mystic has opened for us the hidden possibilities of spiritual growth we must courageously face the possibility even though it may disturb

or tend to modify our normal ways of life and thought."⁴⁹

The mystic unifies his mind and endeavours to clarify his vision, not to escape from the discomforts of life, but to see reality as it truly is. God is not used to achieve this end, for He is no means. He is loved, and the mystic sets to work upon himself so that this beloved object may do work upon him. The ultimate direction of his mind is always outward rather than inward.

The mystic preparation is essentially a moral preparation for the divine response in part comes as a moral necessity, though the ultimate revelation is always by virtue of the grace of God. However, he can never be sure that God will reveal Himself to him, even though he describes it in part as a result of a sequence of moral cause and effect.

The mystic does not flee from the world, for his rejection of human goods indicates the working of a vision of a good, so valuable and supreme that the world in contrast appears worthless. As James puts it, "his very denial is in the interest of 'a deeper 'yes'"⁵⁰ His denials are attributes to the greatness of that being.

49. Inver (Ishrat Hasan): The Metaphysics of Ishāl; p.24.

50. James (William): The Varieties of Religious Experience; p.416.

which is in itself the most manifest of all beings, but which remains hidden owing to the infirmity of our eyes of intelligence. The mystic does not hate the world; he is superior to it. Working simultaneously with human purposes, he undertakes to recover the world beyond.

The mystical experience is a concrete experience. The subject stands face to face with the objective reality which is consciously apprehended. The experience was a distinctive character of its own. If one objects that we cannot know God, one can also object that one cannot know matter, life and mind as well. They have been mere objects of experience, their real nature being hidden from us. As such, there is no reason why we should dismiss the mystic's claim to know God through religious experience.

The physicist accepts the hypothesis of electrons and ions, and explains the physical phenomena. But it is impossible to know the ultimate nature and the physical world, for his theories are mere symbols. The electrons and the ions are not observable, and yet are accepted as real. The idea of God is as real as the electron of the physicist,⁵¹ for if there are certain kinds of experience that account for the existence of matters, life and

51. Radhakrishnan (S.): An Idealist View of Life; pp.16-17

and mind, there are certain other kinds of experience that account for the existence of God. What is called absolute materialism is Idealism, for even matter is reduced to an abstract idea. Idealism fills the universe with meaning and value. It concerns the ultimate nature of reality, and endows life with significance and purpose. Ideal values are dynamic forces that have led man beyond the sensible world.

The mystic gains knowledge of this world beyond through the mystical experience. Knowledge thus gained is incommunicable; but its incommunicability does not invalidate intuition, for, it is still knowledge, and knowledge gained through direct contact with reality. Moreover, what about the experience of our own self? Are they also not incommunicable? and yet, do we not know that our self exists? Even the concepts to which we turn to communicate our experiences fail us. The mystical experience is a unique experience. Therefore it is incommunicable.

It needs a considerable exercise of sympathy to look beyond the external manifestations of mysticism, and to seek the purpose lying beneath them. Even the artist and the scholar, along with the mystic, seem to be in pursuit of useless, hence inefficient and even

antisocial knowledge. The appearances have always failed to reveal the real motive and consequently the real value of these careers. Therefore, all that we can say at present is that the physical and the mental peculiarities of the mystical temperament and the mystical experience itself, are as yet to be studied dispassionately, rather than to be decided one way or another, as they belong to the unsolved problems of humanity.

The ultimate aim of the soul is not to see something, but to be something. In this effort to be something, the mystic sharpens his objectivity and acquires a more significant 'I am'. "The end of the ego's quest is not emancipation from the limitations of individuality; it is, on the other hand, a more precise definition of it." ⁵² The experience is a vital act that deepens his whole being and sharpens his will with the assurance that the world is not something to be seen or known through concepts, but something to be made and remade by continuous efforts.

The mystical life is autonomous. It directs all motives and meanings of life, blessing the personality with a true cosmic status. The self identifies itself with a larger self, the absolute and in this identification

52. Iqbal (M.): Reconstruction of Religious Thought in Islam; p.196.



it reaches its supreme realisation. Transcending all the limitations and all human scales of value, the mystic discovers his true being; even though he lives in the domain of pure essence he embraces all things and all beings, identifying himself with life and the Universe and bestowing a profound meaning and significance to the life of the world as the spiritual expansion of the Divine.

We may now try to understand and appreciate Rūmī as a thinker and as a mystic. The study of Rūmī is in reality the study of the philosophical and religious life of all times, as he covers the entire field of all problems arising out of philosophical and religious interests.

Rūmī reflects the cultural unity of mankind. In him we find great variety of thought and experience, as he comes at the end of a developed sequence of philosophical thought and religious experience. Islam covers the creeds of Abraham, Moses, and Jesus, to which is added the theological influence of Greek philosophy, and Persian and Indian influences. And Rūmī reveals the cultural tradition of Muslims in all its manifold aspects, along with the thought currents of Ibn Sīnā. Al Farābī and al-Ghazālī on the one hand, and of Judaism and Zoroastrianism, of Plato and Aristotle and of Neoplatonism, Christianity and Gnosticism on the other.

His attitude is not analytical. He does not dissect Reality and present it piecemeal. Rather, he enters into the very heart of Reality, feels it and lives it, and then communicates his own living experience to all. It is this intuitive approach that distinguishes him from the purely philosophical thinkers like Ghazzālī, whose method is scientific and philosophical. As Khalifa Abdul Hakim points out "Yet Ghazzālī can seldom compete with him in ardour and exaltation of feeling, in originality and profundity of thought, or in power and freedom of expression." 53

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53. Khalifa (Abdul Hakim): The Metaphysics of Iqbal; pp. 7-8.

CHAPTER V

MAN'S CONCEPTION OF GOD

1. The idea of God has had an unbroken sway over the human mind from the most primitive ages of human history to the present day. The God of religion as the universal mind working with a conscious design, is at once the beginning and the end of the universe, fills the universe with meaning and value and makes the world intelligible as a system of ends.

Primitive man, whose knowledge and control over environment were inadequate, found in different cults, rites and spells certain attitudes and modes of behaviour, through which he could overcome a dangerous situation or conflict. Man's inability to adjust himself to a constantly changing environment compelled him to resort to some superior objects of worship out of fear and awe, with a view to adjusting himself to difficult and changing circumstances. The hunting, pastoral and agricultural stages brought with themselves their own economic needs, thereby revealing a corresponding change in the ideas of divinity.

Religion is the manifestation of the urge to completeness. Coupled with this urge is the acute realization on the part of man that the world also is imperfect and that it is in need of a deeper reality to complete it. Both for thought and spiritual experience the world has proved unsatisfying; and this has compelled man to go beyond it to find its true explanation and value in a deeper ground of thought and life, an all-comprehending Supreme Being, in God.

God is necessary to the inner life of man; and man has attempted to reach Him by various means. Even his rational deductions are the expression of the constant tendency of man's spirit to rise to Him. Several arguments have been advanced to this effect.

The Ontological argument involves the reality of God in the idea of God. The idea of God is unique, so that it cannot be a mere idea. God is a being greater than all beings that can be conceived. This idea, in order to be greater than every being conceived, must exist both in reality as well as in intellection, for if it existed only in intellection it would not be so great. God, therefore, necessarily exists.

Descartes asserts that God is infinite and perfect. As such, His idea cannot be formed in man by any

finite object. It must be caused by God Himself. Therefore, God exists. Spinoza infers the existence of God from the idea of God. For him, God is the source and sum of all perfection. He is the infinite and all-inclusive whole, embracing the parallel differentiations of thought and extension as its corresponding aspects. As such, God's reality is inevitably involved in His idea. His concept, he says, includes His existence. He is self-caused, and to be self-caused is to exist necessarily.

Leibniz argues that essences or ethical truths must have their ground in something actual, in existence, of a Necessary Being. In a Perfect Being nothing can hinder the tendency to exist, for in His case what is possible is actual. If God is a Being who is the sum of all reality, then such a conception cannot be considered as a mere idea in the mind. Thought is meaningless without reference to being. Therefore, if there is no such being there would be no thought.

The Cosmological argument begins with the world as given and infers the existence of a God to explain it, from the character of the world. The facts within the world are contingent, there being no element of necessity in them. But this contingency must lead up to something

necessary. Consequently, there must be a necessary Being who is the ground of the contingent. Again, effects are always preceded by causes which in turn are the effects of other causes. But there cannot be an infinite line of causes. The series must arrive at a First or Uncaused cause. This First or Uncaused Cause is God. The teleological argument begins with its emphasis on the presence of Order in the world, and infers from it the existence of God who is the source of the design.

The Moral argument seeks to show that the existence of God solves the problems of the moral life. According to Kant, it is a demand of the moral self that the Highest Good, be realised. There are two elements in the Highest Good, virtue and happiness. But these two elements belong to two different worlds, the intelligible world and the phenomenal world. The postulate of God is the teleological ground of both these worlds, guaranteeing the union of virtue and happiness and consequently the realisation of the Chief Good.

The Historical Proof suggests that the only reason of the consciousness of God in human minds is God himself. The idea of God that has gradually taken form in human race would become meaningless with no reality corresponding to the idea. This growing consciousness of

God as a spiritual and ethical Being must have its source and ground in God Himself.

These proofs are simply the efforts of mankind to demonstrate the existence of God. They, in fact, suggest merely probabilities of greater or less degree, for approach to God through logic is bound to be unsatisfactory. Reason is analytic and discursive and therefore bound to lead to contradictions. As we have seen earlier, Bradley wanted us to transcend reason which is full of contradictions. Similarly, Bergson showed that discursive thought cuts reality.

Rumi argues that logical knowledge of God is not possible. All knowledge depends upon comparison and limitations as it moves in contraries. The nature of a thing is made manifest by contrast with something that lacks its qualities. Our knowledge of phenomena depends on our knowledge of their correlates. Everything is made evident by its contrary. Honey is perceived to be sweet by contrast with vinegar. Were there no darkness and evil we should be forever ignorant of light and good:

"Therefore thou knowest light by its opposite;
opposite reveals opposite in the process of
coming forth."¹

1. The Mathnawi; Vol.I, 1133.

پس با ضد نور دانستی نور :. ضد ضدای نماید در صدور

The Divine Essence, which is the life and soul of all phenomena, cannot be known in this way, because there is nothing that stands in contrast with God and because there is nothing that is the like of Him.

"Hidden things, then, are manifested by means of their opposite; since God hath no opposite, He is hidden. The light of God hath no opposite in all existence, that by means of that opposite it should be possible to make Him Manifest." ²

God never comes into thought, for everything that comes into thought is liable to perish. God is He who is not perichable; He is the Infinite without a beginning and without an end.

"All that you may think of is liable to pass away; he that comes not into thought is God." ³

Thought is a creature, and hence can never be identified with the Creator. It is the shadow of God, as such it cannot resist Him. If the ideas were to contain Him, one who formed the ideas would comprehend Him. But then He

2. Ibid, Vol.I, 1131 and 1134.

پس بنایا بیه پیدا شود : چونک حق را نیست ضد پنهان بود
نور حق را نیست ضدی در وجود : تا بیه او را نکالت پیدا نمود

3. Ibid, Vol.II, 3107.

هر چه اندیشی پریراے نفاست : آنکه در اندیشه تا به آفت خداست



would not be the creator of these ideas. As a matter of fact, the ideas are gross in relation to Him as the physical bodies are gross in relation to them. Reason cannot grasp the fundamental unity of all existence, as it cannot transcend the duality of subject and object. As Rūmī puts it, there is a squint in the eye of the intellect which always sees double.

All that man can know about God is that He exists. The how and why of His existence is outside man's comprehension. Man can think through the medium of the senses. God is beyond the senses, and as such, cannot be thought of. God is eternal and man is an accident. How can an accident comprehend something that is eternal? God, like the Sun, is His own proof. The proof of the Sun is the Sun Himself. His Essence cannot be imagined nor compared.

"The proof of the Sun is the sun himself;
if thou require the proof, do not avert
thy face from him." ⁴

God cannot be seen on account of His extreme subtlety. ⁵ Your breath is visible in winter but invisible

4. Ibid, Vol.I. 116.

از کتاب آمد دلیل آفتاب: گردنیت باید از وی رو متاب

5. Arberry (A.J.): Discourses of Rūmī; p.220.

in summer, not because there is no breath in summer, but because the breath and summer both are subtle. Similarly, your essential elements and attributes cannot be seen except through the medium of some act. Your clemency, for instance, can be seen only when you forgive an offender. Your vengefulness is made visible only when you take vengeance upon a criminal and beat him. Likewise, God's omnipotence; His work alone can be seen.

Things can be arranged according to the degree of superiority possessed by them. A thing superior to another thing is more concealed than the other. Man is endowed with three things: body, spirit and intellect. Body belongs to the lowest category and can be felt. The spirit is superior to it, and is for that reason more concealed. Nevertheless, one can infer its existence from the movement of the body. To infer the existence of intellect is even more difficult for unless one finds an organised and harmonious pattern in behaviour of any being one cannot say that it possesses intellect. Intellect is, therefore, even more concealed than the spirit itself. It is concealed from man in spite of the fact that it is indescribably near to man. What wonder, then, if the Creator of that intellect is also concealed from man even though He is indescribably near to him?

"The intellect is more concealed than the vital spirit; your mental perception makes its way to apprehend the vital spirit sooner than it apprehends the intellect. What wonder if the Creator of that intellect too is with thee? How art thou not conceding the result of that? How, then, should not the King be indescribably near? The intellectual search cannot find the way to Him." 6

As Ibn-al-Arabi says, God considered absolutely, is beyond relation, and therefore beyond knowledge, inconceivable and ineffable, quite independent of created beings in respect of His Essence. "He is the First, the Last" he says, "the Outward, the Inward. He is the Substance of what is manifested, and the substance of what remains latent at the time of manifestation; none sees Him but Himself and none is hidden from Him, since He is manifested to Himself and hidden from Himself." 7

Rumi cites the story of an elephant exhibited in a dark room. Being unable to see it people tried to

6. The Mathnawi, Vol.II; 3254; Vol.IV; 3680, 3687.

باز عقل از روح سخن تر بود. : حس سوی روح زو تر بود
 ۵ چه عجب گر نالایق عقل نیز. : بالذات باشد چون نه مستحسین
 قرب. بیچون چون نباشد شاه را. : که نیاید بحث عقل آت راه را

7. Nicholson (H.A.): Studies in Islamic Mysticism; p-152.

understand it by touch. One who touched its trunk thought it to be a water-pipe; one who touched its ears thought it to be a large fan.

"On account of the diverse place (object) of view their statements differed: one man entitled it 'dal', another 'alif'. If there had been a candle in each one's hand, the difference would have gone out of their words." ⁸

Likewise, man's knowledge of God is partial and one-sided. This partial knowledge also is essentially relative and, as such, does not represent the true nature of God as He is in Himself. It merely supplies us with a rough analogy. Men come into contact with one or other aspect of the Absolute Reality and generalise it as the Absolute Reality.

"Everyone is naturally attached to some veil and judges that it is in sooth the identity ('ayn) of Him." ⁹

Man, therefore, cannot thoroughly comprehend the nature of God. One who thinks that he knows the Divine

8. The Mathnavi; Vol.III, 1267, 1268.

از تکرر گفته شد مختلف : آن یکی دالشی لقب دادین الف
در کف هر کس اگر شمع بدی : اختلاف از گفته شد بیرون شدی

9. Ibid, Vol.IV; 3703.

هر یکی در پرده مودل فوست : دهم او آنست کان خود بمن پیوست

Essence merely knows the picture of his own imagination. He is deluded by the illusion of names and attributes. As a matter of fact, man gives God a form of his own imagination, just as a bull or an ass would picture Him only as a bull or an ass :

"If the animal sense could see the King (God), then the ox and the ass would behold Allah. How should he that is in love with his own imagination and conception be one of them that love the Lord of bounties?" 10

Human attributes cannot be intelligibly applied to Him even when they are raised to infinite perfection. Nevertheless, the analogies about the nature and attributes of God are not entirely false. They are the broken lights of God, revealing one or other aspect of Him. However much the seeker may be concerned with the world of manifestation, his sincere conviction and devotion are bound to cause his false ideas to lead him to God.

10. Ibid, Vol.II; 65; Vol.I, 2759.

گر بیری حق حیدان شاه را : پس بیری کجا و فرالله را
عاشق تصویر و دم خود پشتن : کی بدد از عاشقان ذوالمنن

"Everyone of them gives these indications of the way, in order that it may be supposed that they belong to that Village. Know the truth to be this, that all these various persons are not in the right, nor are (sic) this herd entirely astray." 11

and yet,

"If the lover of that false conception be sincere, that metaphor (unreal judgement) will lead him to the reality." 12

Hümai therefore says the religious experience is the only criterion for the existence of God. With him the existence of God is both a postulate and an experience. His existence cannot be inferred from any other premise, because it is His existence alone that makes all inference possible. As William James puts it, "The attempt to demonstrate by purely intellectual processes the truth of the deliverances of direct religious experience is absolutely hopeless." 13 God, as the spiritual

11. Ibid, Vol.II, 2926-27.

هر کس از راه این نشا بنماز آید دهنه : تا گوی آید که ایشان ز آفت ده اند
این حقیقت دانند حق اند این صمد : فی بکلی گمراهان اند این ربه

12. Ibid, Vol.I, 2760.

عاشق آید و صم اگر صادق بودد : آت مجازش تا حقیقت می کشد

13. James (William): The Varieties of Religious Experience; p.455.

religion demands, cannot be reached by any deductive arguments.

However, Rumi has mentioned the following arguments for the existence of God:

(1) The orderly arrangement of the cosmos indicates a wise creator.

"If there is no Wise Creator, what is the reason of this orderly arrangement, the cosmos? And if there is a Wise Creator, how is His action devoid of meaning?" 14

No painter paints a picture for the sake of the picture itself. There is some purpose behind his action. He paints it for the sake of guests and young people so that they may be delivered from cares. In his picture lies the joy of children and the kind remembrance of departed friends by their friends. Nor does any calligrapher write artistically for the sake of the writing itself but for the sake of reading.

The external form takes shape for the sake of the unseen form.

14. The Mathnawi, Vol.IV, 2999.

گر چہ یہ نیست این ترتیب نیست :۔ در چہ کی صفت چوں فعلش بہ نیست

"The external form is for the sake of the unseen form; and that took shape for the sake of another unseen form." 15

The creation of the world is for the purpose of manifestation, to the end that the treasure of Divine providences may not remain hidden. God said "I was a hidden treasure"; and this hidden treasure burst forth into heaven and earth on account of its fullness." 16

(2) With the revolving object there is a one who causes it to revolve. Every moving object implies a Mover.¹⁷ The body is moved by the spirit which we do not see, but whose existence we infer from the movement of the body.¹⁸ Likewise, God is to be known through the movement of the universe. The universe is the body and God is its life, ever sustaining it and ever maintaining it.

God is the Mover and the Writer. The pen moves according to His wish. We see the pen, but we do not

15. Ibid, Vol.IV, 2867.

نقشِ ظاہر ہر نقشِ غائب است... و اے ہر اے غائب دیگر بست

16. Ibid, Vol.IV, 3028-29.

17. Ibid; Vol.IV, 153.

18. Ibid, Vol.IV, 155.

see the hand. Beholding the beauty of this hand, one would simply say that such a hand cannot be without a pen. He is the Giver of aspiration and can be apprehended by means of the manifestation of the effect alone. He is alive and full of intellect, for the regulated movements in the universe indicate that He is full of knowledge. Knowledge that turns the motion of copper into gold. Rūzi, therefore, says:

"If you do not see Him visibly, apprehend him by means of the manifestation of the effect."¹⁹

(3) Cause is always free from matter as compared to the effect. Thought and imagination, for instance, have effects on the body. A person thinks ill of his enemy. The thought makes him angry which in turn makes him perspire. Perspiration is a material thing; but its cause is thought which is immaterial. One might object that even thought and anger are material as they proceed from brain which is material. But thought in itself is not material even though it comes into existence through something that is material. As compared to the body it is free from matter.

19. Ibid, Vol.IV, 154.

گرفتارای نبینی در نظر: بهم کن آن را با طهارت

Things are material and immaterial. Material is the caused and immaterial is the cause of it. As there are differences in the material things according to the degree of materiality possessed by them, there are also differences in the causes according as they are free from matter. The cause of a cause is free from matter, as compared to its effect; and its cause in turn is freer still. The process continues till an immaterial and the highest cause of all causes is reached. It is completely free from matter, hence cannot be felt. This highest of all causes is God and He is the Formless.

"These forms have their existence from the formless; what means, then, their denial of Him who brought them into existence? Assuredly the Absolute Agent is formless: form is as a tool in His Hand." 20

Yet He cannot be thought of except under certain forms. Man has to get beyond these forms, which veil him from truth. He has to transcend them in his progress towards God.

20. Ibid, Vol.VI, 3738, 3742.

این صدر دارد زبک صورت وجود :: چیست پس بر موجد خویشش صُور
ناعل مطلق بین بی صورت است :: صورت اندر دست او چون آلت است

(4) Cause is superior to the caused as it possesses some quality that is not possessed by the caused. If both are the same, then there is no reason why one should be the cause and the other the caused. Possibilities do not exist by themselves, for existence does not belong to their being. Their existence is caused by some cause.

The process of causes and effects ends with a cause which exists by itself, in the sense that existence belongs to its very being. The process either stops at this cause or continues ad-infinity. In the first case it stops at God. In the second case cause and effect become equally important as both exist by themselves and exist necessarily.

"When there are two likes, O God fearing man, why should this one be more fit than that one for the purpose of creating?" 21

God is hidden in His workshop. His work is the actualisation of the potential; a perpetual clothing of not being with his own qualities. But the work has woven a veil over the worker; so long as man sees nothing but the veil, he is outside God's workshop.

21. Ibid, Vol.VI, 1621.

چونکه در مثل آمدند ای متقی: این چه او لیرازان در خالق

II. God's nature has been described in various ways by philosophers and mystics. The Deistic conception of God sets the Deity over against his world. God is not immanent in the things of the world, nor does He sustain them. He stands apart from the world without maintaining any intimate and living relation with it, even though He creates it. He is a Personal Being, the object of worship, deserving the reverence of man. He is transcendent, and therefore should not be confused with man and the world.

In Pantheism one single and all-embracing Being dwells in all the variety of the Universe. The conception gives effect to the scientific desire of unity. Behind the variety of phenomena there is a Universal Law, which comprehends and expresses itself through them. All things are God. Pantheism, thus, emphasises the immanence of God. God is everywhere present in the world; no region of experience is outside the Divine Care.

The Theistic conception of God makes Him both immanent and transcendent. God is not identical with the world, but the world is not independent of Him either. There is divine activity behind the phenomena of nature and life, and there is a continuous divine revelation in the spirits of men. Theism, thus, seeks to present the

statements of Deism and Pantheism in a form which is consistent with the integrity of the spiritual values. The Pantheistic statement "All is One" is transformed into 'All depends on One'. And instead of speaking of the identity of the self with God in the religious consciousness it speaks of communion and co-operation with God. All elements in the cosmos are related to a single experiment subject and are sustained by a Single Will.

The Qurān is theistic. God is the Creator and is different from His Creation, which has a real existence apart from Him. The creation, therefore, is not an illusion; it is a reality. It came into being from nothing or from non-being. Its existence depends upon God who can reduce it back to nothing.

But it is evident from some of the verses in the Qurān that the Theism of Qurān also passes into a type of Pantheism. The transcendent God, who at first stands outside of His creation, gradually comes nearer and nearer to His creation so that He becomes nearer to man than his own jugular vein. He then identifies himself with his actions before He passes once again into the light of the heavens and the earth, embracing all directions. Finally He enters utter immanence wherein He is the Beginning and He is the End; He is the Outward

and He is the Inward. His Being alone abides, while everything else passes away. The Qurānic Theism, thus, ends in the conception of an all-embracing Divinity, in whom we live and have our being.

It is generally asserted that sufism is a pantheistic doctrine. But the mere assertion that it is pantheistic does not explain its views about God and the Universe. Sufism covers such a great variety of metaphysical and moral ideas that any view may be said to be true of some of its representatives. As a matter of fact, it is not a doctrine with any definite boundaries that would mark it off from Orthodox Islam or from any system of metaphysics.

Early sufism was predominantly ascetic and was an attempt at moral purity, avoidance of sin for fear of God, and the consequent renunciation of the world. About the end of the third century after Mohammad the Muslims began to speculate on the relation of the finite and the infinite. The worship of God turned into an identification of human individuality with the Unconditional Transcendental Ego. Real Being and God are identical; Being, in so far as it is real, is God. If this is Pantheism, then sufism in general may be said to be pantheistic.

But the sufis' intimate communion with a personal

God makes the problem complex. The sufi dies to himself in order to live in God. Some sort of dualism still persists, for it is not simply God living by himself. Haqa, abiding life, always follows his death unto himself. Sufism, therefore, is not Pantheism but Panentheism. As a matter of fact, it is the attempt of the sufis to interpret their feeling of union with the divine into the language of logic that gave it the form of Pantheism.

Rūmī's conception is not pantheistic because he is a believer in the development and survival of the individual personality. Losing oneself in God means for him living in God: it is being clothed with His attributes without losing the essence of one's own personality, rather than the merging of the drop in the homogeneous ocean. As such, he describes the ultimate union of man with God in analogies that speak of the preservation of personality even in that ultimate absorption.

"He exists in respect of the survival of his essence, but his attributes have become non-existent in the attributes of Him (God)."²²

It is evident that in his views about God, Rūmī is not a pantheist, even though certain passages describe

22. Ibid, Vol.III, 3670.

صفت از روی بقای ذات او : نیست گشته وصف او در وصف هو

his oneness with God in terms which appear to be pantheistic. Although he identifies himself with the all-comprehending reality of God, calling himself cloud, rain and meadow, such a belief need not be confused with pantheism, for his standpoint is consistent with his belief in a personal God. The Divine immanence does not absorb and dissolve the finite selves. On the contrary, it enhances the reality of the finite selves, emphasises their existence, and brings to light their individuality.

Before Rūmi all possible conceptions about the nature of God were preached and taught, some emphasising the Divine Attributes along with the Divine Essence, some identifying them with the Divine Essence and some completely denying them — all exaggerating one or other aspect of the truth. It was Rūmi who attempted to satisfy the cravings of the theologians, the philosophers and the mystics by creating a synthesis of the philosophical and the mystical elements. A careful study of his thought reveals that he is successful in his attempt.

In his theory of emanation and in his conception of the Absolute Unity he bears a striking similarity to Plotinus, who was known to the Oriental System through his immediate successors. Rūmi states what Plotinus states, but clothed in obscure and fanciful allegory. He

refers to the Absolute Unity by metaphors like Sea, Light, Love, Wine, Beauty and Truth. The Neo-Platonic conceptions of the Universal Mind and the Universal Soul are called by him Aql-i-Kul and Jan-i-Kul or Nafs-i-Kul. He affirms the soul's original purity and its pre-existence in God. The soul of man had its being in God and it laments its fallen state in the world in which it has remained embodied. Sûrat is the manifestation of soul from which it ceaselessly strives to return to the fountain whence it came. This awakening of the soul from the sleep of phenomenal existence and its striving towards the Ultimate Unity also reminds one of Plotinus. But Rumi parts company with Plotinus in so far as his Unity is essentially personal in character. It is the Divine Beloved, unlike the Neoplatonic God who is purely an abstract entity. God is the All-Good and the All-Beautiful to whom man is irresistably drawn. Rûmî's God is a personal God.

The religious consciousness demands that God must be a personality. A God who is the God of the whole Universe without having any relation with its details is not sufficient for religion. His impersonality is recognised as the Divine Principle or the Moral Order for He determines the destiny of the universe and man and works

on a large scale, there being no discoverable point of identity between His own purpose and that of man. Such a God is shadowy and elusive. The possibility of communion between the soul and God must exist so that God's purpose should also be the individual's purpose. The barriers between man and God must be overcome. The assurance that the highest aspirations of man are not frustrated has its roots in the principle that the Ground of the world is a Self-conscious and Self-determining Spirit. God's personal character is revealed in the teleological order which embraces the world of existence in a living unity. This personal God appears in the souls of men and in the religious experience of the race.

It might be objected that the conception of a personal God contradicts His infinity. But to think of personality as essentially finite is to confound personality with individuality. The individual is finite, but the person is infinite. As Lotze points out, only the Infinite is completely personal. To think of God as being all that one ought to be is the reality of the moral ideal. By tracing the Divine image in oneself one learns the very nature of God. As a matter of fact, the spiritual and ethical view of the universe necessitates the conception of personality. God is to be conceived as

"Super-personal" rather than 'impersonal', says Bradley, the absolute stands above its internal distinctions and includes them as elements in its fullness, a concrete identity of all extremes.²³

Kūṇai's God is not a bare abstraction who stands behind the scenes eternally unmoved. His personal attitude towards God introduces positive elements in the conception. God is the Divine Beloved. He is the candle, everything else is the moth that dashes itself against the candle and is consumed by it. However much its agony and distress the moth cannot do without the candle, for if it were not consumed by the candle it would not be a candle.²⁴ Likewise the man who can do without God is no man at all; while if any man were to comprehend God, he would no more be God, for God consumes man and takes him naught. The true man, therefore, is never free from striving. He always revolves restlessly and ceaselessly about the Light of God.

Divine Love pervades the cosmos. All things, though they seem diverse, are ruled by this eternal principle and are moved to endeavour for their own ful-

23. Bradley (F.H.): Appearance and Reality; p.471.

24. Arberry (A.J.): Discourses of Kūṇai; pp.47-48.

filament. The Divine Essence is the only Love that surges in the universe, for every atom in the universe journeys towards God. Everything is moving towards its source. A static thing is destined to suffer like a tree that suffers the pain of the saw or the blows of the axe. The sun that illumines the world at morning tide; the water that goes up from the sea to the sky, falls as rain and flows as river; the earth that takes the form of grass; in fact, all the elements, wander from place to place striving to rise towards this Unity which reveals itself in the union of all loving souls. All phenomena when stripped of their individuality become one with each other and with the Real Being. They are the individualised modes of the Real Being that wipes out their individuality. In the words of Rûni :

"This thirst in our souls is the attraction exerted by the Water: We are Its, and It is ours. The Wisdom of God in destiny and in decree made us lovers of one another." ²⁵

25. The Mathnavi, Vol.III, 3399-4400.

جذب آب است این عطش در جان ما: ما از آب او و او هم آب ما
حکمت مقدر قضا و قدر : کرد ما را عاشقان همه

The religious consciousness also demands an ethical God. An ethical God is a moral personality, sustaining the moral order, maintaining ethical relations with men and working for good in the world. But His ethical attributes become isolated qualities if there is no immanent working in the world of experience. Rūṣi's God is a moral personality with living ethical attributes which evoke our affections and move our wills.

God is benevolent and compassionate. He governs and directs the cosmic process. Every event has its own place in the design that exists in His mind and is worked out in the world. In other words, God is not indifferent to human life. He is interested in, and is sympathetic to, human ideals and values. And it is his boundless mercy and infinite compassion that help man in his efforts to achieve noble ideals.

God is Absolute Beauty. All earthly beauty is nothing but a manifestation and reflexion of this Absolute Beauty. The real object of love, therefore, is not the earthly form; it is the Divine Beauty manifested in earth, which is only the medium through which the Uncreated Beauty reveals Itself and carries on its creative activity. It is the real object of all search, all strife and all opposition.



"From that hidden goblet of Thine Thou hast poured out of the cup of the noble (prophets and saints) a draught on the dusty earth. From the draught thereof there is a trace on the locks and cheeks of the fair: hence kings lick the earth of which the bodies of the fair are made."²⁶

Every form in the world is beautiful viewed as a copy of the divine archetype. The mystic who contemplates these copies perceives only the Eternal Beauty in the ever-changing aspects of creation. All others are veiled by illusion. God thus revealed to him exercises complete sway over his soul and renders him a seeker of union with the true Beloved. And Love, whether earthly or heavenly, ultimately leads him yonder, to this Eternal Beauty, for God is Beauty and God is Love.

God is Absolute Mercy. Even His wrath is mercy in disguise. This Absolute Mercy does not seek to do violence unless there is some advantage in the act. All pain and punishment that He inflicts upon man is for some good purpose. His mercy, thus, precedes His wrath.

26. Ibid, Vol. V, 372-73.

جرعہ بر ریختی ز آفتاب حید جام : بر زمین خاکے من کاس اکرام
صفت بزرگ وزج از جریش نشاء : خاکے را شاطان می پسند از آفات



"His (God's) mercy is prior to his wrath, to the end that by God's mercy he (the afflicted person) may suffer application.

his (God's) mercy eternally preceded his wrath in order that the stock-in-trade (which is) existence, should come to hand." 27

But this mercy is not like human mercy, because human mercy is mingled with pain. Nor can its nature be thoroughly comprehended. Only its effects can be experienced.

"His mercy is not the mercy of Adam, for sorrow is mingled with the mercy of Adam. The mercy of the creature is anxious; the mercy of God is exempt from sorrow and anxiety. Know that the mercy of the Unconditioned (God) is like this, O father; naught but the effect thereof comes into the imagination." 28

The Divine Bounty is eternal. It is not dependent on receptivity as human bounty is in which case

27. Ibid, Vol.III, 4166-67.

رحمتی سابق بدست از قہر ذات : تا ز رحمت گردد اصل امتحان
رحمتی بر قہر ذات سابق شدت : تا کہ سرمایہ وجود آید بدست

28. Ibid, Vol.III, 3632-34.

رحمتی نے رحمت آدم بود : کہ مزاج رحمت آدم غم بود
رحمت مخلوق باشد عقبہ ناکہ : رحمت حق از غم و غمتہ است پاکہ
رحمت بے چوں چنین است اے پدر : تا یہ اندر و ہم از وے جز اثر

receptivity is necessary. Bounty is an attitude of the Creator, while receptivity is an attribute of the creature. As a matter of fact, the capacity to receive depends upon His bounty, which is infinite and unconditional and, therefore, does not depend on the temporal.²⁹

The prophets attained prophethood through Divine favour. Pharaoh too, made great personal efforts in the way of bounty and charity, but his beneficence and efforts had no lustre, since Divine favour was not present. He is like the military Commander in charge of a fortress. Although he is kind and generous to his people in the fortress, his generous actions are all without worth because he intends to become a rebel.

Nevertheless, God's ^{favour} ~~was~~ not entirely denied to Pharaoh. He probably favoured him secretly and caused him to be rejected for a good purpose, for, as Kuri puts it —

"His Mercy is long in gripping, but grips tight;
His presence does not keep you absent from Him
for one moment." ³⁰

Every created being is spiritual in so far as it receives the overflowing Divine Grace, which is

29. Ibid, Vol.V, 1537-38.

30. Ibid, Vol.II, 2533.



sprinkled throughout the universe and to which man's endeavours should finally lead. God is good, says Gandhi, there is ^{no} evil in Him. But Goodness is not an attribute of God. Goodness is God. He is the supreme alchemist, who turns iron into gold, evil into good. He is goodness and He is Truth. 31

God is not only truth and love but also justice. He acts according to His own fixed laws, never suspending them, so that the moral order in the universe is not broken. He is the source from which all things come and the Good into which they finally enter. Man's grief does not melt Him, nor does any pain make Him sorrowful.

"He covers up the sin many times in order to manifest His grace; then again, He chastises the sinner in order to manifest His Justice, to the end that both these attributes may be displayed, and the former be hope inspiring and the latter deterrent." 32

III. The study of Greek Philosophy, Mysticism and

31. Gandhi (M.K.): The Supreme Power; p.47.

32. The Mahabharata, Vol.IV, 170-71.

بارها پوشیده بی اظهار فضل : باز گیرد از بی اظهار عدل
تا که این برد و منت ظاهر شود : آن مبشر گردد این منذر شود

Neo-Platonism exercised an enormous influence on the Muslim conceptions of God. But these foreign sources were given a basis in the verses of the Qurān. Several attempts were made to know the phenomena and the Reality underlying them.

The Mutazilites laid stress on the unity of God. The Qurānic conception of unity of God was consistent with the multiplicity of attributes. But according to the Mutazilites the unity was inconsistent with multiplicity. They, therefore, denied the attributes of God. They argued that if any attribute is different from the essence then there is a multiplicity. On the other hand, if it is identical with the essence it is nothing but the essence itself. The Unity of God and the multiplicity of attributes cannot co-exist. God in their hands, thus, became merely a bare abstraction.

But Rūmi is against such an attempt at abstraction of God from His attributes. He believes in the attributes of God and in this point he comes nearer to the school led by Al-Ashāri, which maintained the reality of the attributes of God. God, according to this school, is the Ultimate Necessary Existence, carrying His own attributes. The attributes, as such, are not inconsistent with the Divine Unity. An upholder of this view, Rūmi gives a number of Divine attributes.

God is 'ahad', One and has no second. He is formless, indivisible and uncreated. He is unthinkable and indescribable, hence, unknowable and unknown. He is the nearest to man and is the farthest from him. He is the Ultimate Ground of everything that exists.

God is the Absolute Being. He has no equal. He has no origin and He has no end. Being neither Universal nor particular, He is free from all limitations. He has no opposite; nor is there anything in the like of Him. God is the Mysterious Power that pervades the Universe. This Power transcends the senses and is felt rather than seen. There is an unalterable Law that governs the universe. This Law is not a blind Law, because there is orderliness in the universe. This Law is God.

The world is unreal because it is changing every moment. Yet, it is real, in so far as it has something about it that persists. Everything is ever changing and ever dying. Underlying this change is a Living Power that does not change, the Power that creates and destroys and recreates. This Power is God, and this Power is the Underlying Unity in the variety of phenomena. As is found in the Gītā, He is :

"The supreme goal, supporter, lord, witness, abode, refuge, disinterested friend, origin and end, the

resting place, the storehouse in which all beings are merged at the time of universal destruction, and the imperishable seed." 33

God is one, and He comprehends all. One is perfection. Being in all numbers there can be no number without it. Any addition to it is diminution. As such, number exists only in the world of plurality, there being no room for it in the world of Divine Unity, any verbal expression of which virtually means a denial of that Unity.

"In the world of Divine Unity ^{here} is no room for Number, But Number necessarily exists in the world of Five and Four." 34

"That Unity is beyond description and condition: nothing comes into the arena of speech except duality." 35

God is unsupported, says Hallāj, unconditioned, the eternal one, without beginning and end, beyond the limits

33. The Bhagvadgītā: Ch.IX, v.18.

34. Nicholson (R.A.): Selected Poems from the Divān-i-Shams-i-Tabriz; xxvi; 7.

در جهان وحدت شد این عدد را گنج نیست
این عدد هست از فردت در جهان بیع و چار

35. The Mathnavi; Vol.VI, 2034.

آن یکی ز آن سوی و صفیست و حال : جزودی ناید بمیدان مقال

of space and time, to whom nothing is impossible. He also says Jāmi, that the Absolute Being is Pure Being, who is not subject to any defect or diminution or to plurality. He is the Ultimate Ground and Cause of everything but is Himself uncaused, Omniscient and Himself unperceived and unknown. For Plotinus God is absolutely one. He is the Unity that lies beyond all multiplicity. In Him there is no plurality, no movement and no distinction. He is over and above all thought, which involves the distinction between subject and object. He is indescribable in terms of volition too, because volition involves the distinction between the willer and the willed, as well as in terms of activity which involves the distinction between the actor and that which is acted upon. In other words, He is ineffable and inconceivable.

In God's presence, therefore, no two "I"s can be contained. Either man has to die before Him or God has to die before man. As God's dying is impossible and inconceivable, He being living and immortal, man has to die before Him.³⁶

" You may count a hundred thousand sweet
apples in your hand:

36. Arberry (A.J.): Discourses of Rūmī; p.36.

If you wish to make one, crush them all together." 37

Plurality is thus inconsistent with Divine Unity. As Rūmī says, if you tie two birds together they will not fly, in spite of the fact that their wings have become four. But if a dead bird is tied to a living one, then they will fly because there is no duality present. The realm of Pure Being is the realm of "colourlessness" as he calls it. It is the Absolute Unity, in which there is no individualisation or limitation of any kind.

Nevertheless, colour proceeds from this realm of colourlessness. The One appears as the Many, the Unity displaying itself in forms which are outwardly opposed. Oil, even though formed from water is opposed to water. Rose springs from thorn and thorn springs from rose, yet both are at war with each other. Strife and discord are characteristic of phenomenal forms. Yet they are the Divine Essence viewed under the aspect of 'Otherness', identical like ice and water.

37. Nicholson (R.A.): Selected Poems from the Divān-i-Shams-i-Tabriz; xxi; 8.

مه هزاران سیب شیرین شمری در دست خویش
گر یکی خواهی که گردد جلد را در هم فشار

"Conceive the Soul as a fountain, and these
created things as rivers:"

While the fountain flows, the rivers run from it." 38

" Since colourlessness (pure unity) became the
captive of colour (manifestation in the phenomenal
world), a Moses came into conflict with a Moses." 39

It is, however, a mystery that these forms proceed
from the Formless Reality, to which their phenomenal nature
is opposed. Does all this discord mark a deep design and
a harmonious purpose? Or is this riddle insoluble by the
intellect? Or is the solution to be found in mystical
bewilderment? The treasure of Divine Unity can be found
only through true self-abandonment, through the complete
emptying of oneself and of all things.

" When you attain unto the colourlessness which
you originally possessed, Moses and Pharaoh are
at peace with each other." 40

God is One, though religions are many, just as
the light is one though the lamps are many. One who

38. Ibid, xii, 4.

جان را چو چشمه دان دین منبها چو جویما
با چشمه مست باقی جویما از زور و اشت

39. The Bathnavi; Vol.I, 2467.

چونک می رنگی اسیر رنگ شد : موسی با موسی در جنگ شد

40. Ibid, Vol.I, 2468.

چون بسی رنگی رسی کان دشتی : موسی و فرعون دارد آشتی





fixes his gaze upon the lamp is lost in plurality. One who looks at the light is delivered from the dualism inherent in the finite body. The Truth is independent of outward form, shining equally brightly in the tavern as in the mosque or the Church. The religion of the heart alone has value. It is not the monopoly of any particular creed for all creeds are one. The ways to God are more than the number of stars in heaven. All forms and objects of worship are broken lights of the One Being. God does not dwell in earth or heaven; He abides in the heart. The names are mere metaphors; save his face everything else is fancy. He is not found by search because the seeker does not seek Him until he finds Him.

"What means this idol-form, if this is the
house of the Kābā ?

And what means this light of God, if this is
a Magian temple? " 41

God is infinite. He is unlimited and boundless,
perfect, complete and self-sufficient as against the
finite whose grounds and conditions of existence lie

41. Nicholson (P.A.): Selected Poems from the Divān-i-Shams-i-Tabriz; xv; 2.

این صدف بت چیست گرایان خانه کعبه است
وین لوردها چیست گرایان دیرمغاسبت

beyond itself. God is infinite. But He is not infinite in the sense of spatial infinity, for temporal and spatial infinities are not absolute. They are nothing more than the interpretations put by thought upon the creative activity of God. God is infinite in the infinite inner possibilities of His creative activity, of which the universe is only a partial manifestation or expression.

God is eternal. There is a succession and change in the world of phenomena and there is beginning and end to this succession in time. This is essentially a serial time and, for that reason, untrue. But there is a change without succession as is found in man's own self, wherein the inner states interpenetrate each other in such a way that one cannot discern where one ends and the other begins. This is pure Duration which is an organic whole and which operates in the present. The past is not left behind nor does the future lie ahead. It is this duration that is applicable to the life of God, the entire sweep of manifestation being nothing but a moment in His inner life.

God is omnipotent. Omnipotence would suggest that God has the power to invest the content of His will with reality. God possesses the highest attribute of Power. The Universe is sustained by His activity. He is self-

sufficient and independent, and not limited by anything that does not proceed from His own will. The nature of God is, therefore, dynamic and highly active in its essence. Being the absolute unconditioned ground of all that there is, the sole and sufficient cause of all existence, He is a self-directing and self-conscious energy, the one infinite life who is continuously active, and who loves activity connecting mysteriously enough even the most incongruous things, as the vision of the eye and the fat of the eye, the dust of which man is made and man himself. Consequently, everything is made capable of fulfilling the purpose for which it was created. As Rumi puts it :

"With a God so mighty that in a moment He causes a hundred worlds like ours to come into existence from non-existence." 42

Some might object that Omnipotence is incompatible with any limitation. God, instead of bringing about the result by His mere word, uses means and therefore works under limitation. But these limitations are willed by God Himself, hence are not defects. For Him what is possible means what is compossible. It is not correct to suppose

42. The Mathnawi, Vol. I, v: 522.

با چنان قیاد حقایق می‌رسم : مد جو عالم هست گرداند بدم

that the abstractions of possibility and impossibility are prior to God. In fact, they come into being with the world of dependent existences. Hence, the conception of a possibility not willed by Him becomes a pure abstraction. It is in the region of fact rather than of possibility that the idea of Omnipotence gains positive value.

God is omnipresent. But one cannot refer Him to a spatially extended world, because He is not a Being in space. The spatial order has developed out of the coexistence of individual elements. God is the condition of space as it is He who brings into existence the world of interacting individuals. He, therefore, cannot be limited by space. Again, since He is the active ground of all existence the sphere of His operation extends to every point of space. Hence God's Omnipresence means that His being is not separated from His activity.

The Omnipresence of God implies the immanence of God. But Rūmī does not draw this conclusion. He makes God neither transcendent nor immanent.

"Not united, not separated, O Perfection; nay,
devoid of quality or description or causation." 43

Yet He is both transcendent and immanent. He is transcendent because He is beyond space and time, and at the same time the condition of all space and time.

43. Ibid. Vol.III; v: 1340.

متصل ہی منقول ہی اے کمال :۔ ہر جہت و جگہ و امتداد

God is transcendent. He is transcendent in the sense of being a necessary being, self-begetten, self-caused, self-existent, independent and absolute, in contradiction to the contingent, created and determined beings of the phenomenal world. God is transcendent because He is beyond space. Rumi argues that man's thoughts and moods have no place. The Creator of these thoughts and moods is subtler than these, just as the builder of the house is subtler than the house. The house is the medium through which his subtlety is made visible, and God's subtlety in like manner enters the sensible world in order to display itself.

Where is He who is beyond the heavens and apart from all that exists? Rumi would say the demand is invalid, for whence and where is this objection itself? It is neither in the tongue, nor in the mouth. Even if you cut yourself piece by piece you will not find its place. So your objection has no place, because your thought has no place. When you cannot discover the place of your own thought, how can you discover the place of the Creator of that thought?⁴⁴ Your thoughts and moods are beyond your control and you are incapable of penetrating them. How do you expect, then, to penetrate your Creator? The Upanisads give a similar conception. God is subtler than all gross phenomena. He is the subtle essence underlying all phenomena, and at the same time the Origin of all phenomena.

44. Arberry (A.J.): Discourses of Rumi; p.219.

God is beyond time. Terms 'Prior' and 'Posterior' have nothing to do with Him, as His priority is a spiritual priority. These terms involve duality which is inconsistent with Divine Unity. All the Divine Attributes are eternal and essentially identical with each other. It is only in regard to their effect that they can be discriminated.

" 'Tis a spiritual priority, unqualified and unconditioned, Have you seen the prior and the posterior without duality (Have you seen them to be one) ? " 45

It is a grave error, therefore, to ignore the essential transcendence of God and confuse Him with the world, in which His Light is temporarily reflected.

However, this does not mean that God is cut off from the world of existences within which the time process rules; nor that the time-process is unreal, the timeless God being the truth of the Universe. But God is not eternal in the sense that He fills endless time, nor is He eternal in the sense that He has no relation to time. He is eternal because He is over and above the

45. The Mathnawi, Vol.IV, 3744.

سبق ہے چوت و پندرہ معنی :۔ سابق و مسبوق دیری ہے ددی

process of time. Being the ultimate condition of its existence, He is not subject to it.

And yet God is immanent. He is the all-one spiritual primal force which reveals itself in everything, and to whose life, power, wisdom and goodness correspond the life and perfection of the universe. Everything possesses its own value and holds in itself its own future, as one and the same life pervades in ascending series of powers.

Everything comes from God who is the Real Being and the Essence of all existents. The Divine Essence is the sole ground and cause of existence of the phenomenal forms in which its effects are manifested. Everything is only a shell in relation to Him, He being the kernel of all life and all that there is. As the cause of all things, says Spinoza, God is the essential heart of things, the sapidity in water and the light of the moon and the Sun, as the Gītā describes Him.⁴⁶

"Before Omnipotence all the people of the Divine Court of audience (the world) are as helpless as the embroiderer's fabric before the needle."⁴⁷

46. The Bhagavadgītā: Ch.VII, v.8.

47. The Mathnavi, Vol.I, 612.

بیش قدرت خلق حمد دارد : عاجزان چون پیش سوزن کارگر

God is Absolute Beauty, says Jāmi, Absolute Knowledge and Perfection. Therefore, all beauty, knowledge and perfection found in the world are derived from Him. In fact, all things in the world are His attributes. As is found in the Gītā :

" All this is permeated by Me in My unmanifested aspect as ice by water, and beings abide in the idea within me." 46

For Iqbāl, the Ultimate Reality is both immanent and transcendent. It is immanent because it comprehends and encompasses the whole cosmos. But it is not immanent in the pantheistic sense, because it is a personal reality. God has an ego-hood, a consciousness of His own 'I-ness' which, however, is beyond the grasp of the experience of finite egos. God is both in man and out of man; He is both the divine darkness and the unencompassed light.

McTaggart's Ultimate Reality is the Absolute which is broken up into finite egos with the result that the finite selves became eternal. This immortality of finite egos places the Absolute in the position of a community rather than a person. But Iqbāl maintains that

46. The Bhagavadgītā, Ch.IX.v.4.

the Absolute cannot be a mere community as in that case it cannot exist over the above the finite egos. Again, there would not be any possibility of the creation of new egos in the universe, the differentiations of the Absolute being all fixed. The Universe is not a completed act, and the process of creation has not come to an end. The orderliness and adjustment in the differentiations of Absolute is far from being a permanent orderliness and adjustment. In fact, this orderliness is yet to be achieved through incessant efforts on the part of the finite egos. In one word, the finite egos are not the necessary differentiations of the Absolute. 49

Existence, therefore, is a Divine Gift conferred on request which may be either explicit or implicit. Everything was created on account of need, and everything has received actual existence and realised its potentialities. Not-being has derived its transient existence from Absolute who endows it with being. It, therefore, loves God as the beggar loves the bountiful giver. From this Spirit all forms appear, and from this Sea of Wisdom all waves of human thoughts, disposition and action leap to light.

49. Enver (Ishrat Hasan): Metaphysics of Iqbal; pp. 82-83.

"We and our existences are really non-existences: thou art the Absolute Being which manifests the perishable. We are not, and there was no demand on our part; yet thy grace was hearkening to our unspoken prayer and calling us into existence." 50

Whether transcendent or immanent, God is with those who are free from the illusion of phenomenal existence, from the deception of sense-perception. It is his transcendence that leads man to the full development of his personality. It is his destination, his guide on the way, without which his journey will be a purposeless journey. Being immanent He is never absent from the world, the rays of the Divine sun having been diffused and woven through creation.

"Your calling God 'formless' (transcending forms) or 'formed' (immanent in forms) is vain, without your liberation from form. Whether God is 'formless' or 'formed' He is with him that is all kernel and has gone forth from the husk." 51

50. The Mathnavi, Vol.I, 602, 610.

ما عد مہا بیتم و صیتیاے ما :۔ تو و برد مطلق نانی ما
ما نبودیم و تقاصات نبود :۔ لطف تو ناگفتہ مای شنود

51. Ibid, Vol.II, 68-69.

ما مقدر یا مقدر گفتنت :۔ بالملک آمد بے رموز رستنت
ما مقدر یا مقدر ویشیت :۔ کو همه معزست و بیرون شوزیت

The Upaniṣadic conception is similar to this conception of Rūmī. As is found in the Śvetāśvatara Upaniṣad God is present in fire, in water and in all universe. He is transcendent, as the Kaṭha-Upaniṣad says, beyond all the happiness and the misery of the world. In other words, He is both immanent and transcendent, immanent like salt in water, filling each and every corner of the universe, and transcendent, overflowing the universe to limitless boundaries.

"As in a mirror, so (Brahman may be seen clearly) here in this body; as in a dream, in the world of the Fathers; as in the water, he is seen about in the world of the Gandharvas; as in the light and shade, in the world of Brahma." 52

The Qurānic conception makes God predominantly a transcendental God, beyond imagination and beyond all human endeavours at attainment. He is infinitely exalted above His creatures, even though He is in close relation with the Universe and man. However, the Qurān gives Him many attributes that are analogous to the human qualities, maintaining at the same time that there is nothing even like the likeness of Him. As such, even if He is nearer to man than His own neck-vein, His nearness should not be

52. Kaṭha-Upaniṣad: II, 6/5.

regarded as spatial. Everything lives through Him, yet nothing is like Him. He cannot be contained by the Universe, nor can He be bound by time and space. Yet, He breathed His own spirit into man.

He is the Creator who creates things by a sheer act of will. He creates them out of nothing by His mere utterance "Be". Being the source of all life, every being exists and persists through Him. He is the only self-subsisting, eternal and necessary Being, who is endowed with the highest attributes. Everything else has a contingent existence. Everything is perishable except His Own Being.

God is omniscient. His living relation to the whole of reality shows that His experience is universal and His consciousness all-embracing. He is the ground of the medium in which individual existences interest so that every fact and every movement in the universe has a meaning for Him. The objects in the universe are the expression of His Will, and are dependent upon His Will. They are not given to Him from without. They are intimately related to Him, and He knows them through 'intellectual intuition'. Every movement and every thought in the universe is an experience in Him. The Qur'anic conception of God makes the infinity of His knowledge

unattainable by man, who, for this reason, cannot rise to be equal to Him. Nor does God incarnate Himself. However, He does come into the closest personal touch with His chosen ones. Even though He acts according to definite ways, His way is inscrutable. Being the Light of the heavens and the earth, He comprehends everything. Nothing is hidden from Him.

God is independent of Causality. He is the Absolute Knower, Willer and Doer. In spite of the fact that He uses means to bring about desired effects, He is not destined to act necessarily through causes which come from His own nature. He effects all things by acts of His Absolute and uncontrolled Will with means or without means. In other words, He does not necessarily cause things according to the nature and dictates of the primary or Universal Intellect which is emanated from Him as a necessity of His essential nature. He is, therefore, not related to the effect as a cause. As a result, no thought can comprehend Him.

"Not united, not separated, O perfection; nay devoid of quality of description or causation. Thou art not contained in the bosom of any thought, nor art Thou joined with the effect, as a cause." 53

53. The Mathnawi, Vol. III; 1340, 1342.

متعلیٰ منفصل نے اے کمال :۔ ہر ایک یوں و جگہ و امتثال
تو گیتی در کنار نکرتی :۔ فی معلول قریب یوں علیٰ

Again, not being the physical cause of things and events, which must cause and act according to the dictates of a certain nature, He is also not the four temperaments, heat, cold, dryness and moisture, inherent in things of the phenomenal world.⁵⁴ God is the First Mover, said Aristotle. He is the First Cause and in His character and absolute end. But He is not a first mechanical cause that existed before the world and created it. He is rather a teleological cause, that works from the end, in the sense that He is logically prior to all beginning.

God, therefore, is not incapable of acting in any other way than He is doing. He is the master of Himself and can perform any action in any way He likes. He creates all causes and effects, although it seems that every cause is the effect of another cause. Steel and flint cause fire to be produced, food and medicine cause health, only in so far as God uses them as means to His appointed ends.

"My action is uncaused and upright (independent):
I have the power of pre-determination, I have no

54. Ibid, Vol.II, 1625.

cause. I alter my custom at the time I choose; at the time I will I lay the dust that rises in front." 55

The Divine Names are all derivative in as much as they refer to the corresponding eternal Attributes of the Divine Essence. They are, in fact, the particular modes, forms and aspects of the One Essence with which they are ultimately identical. Nevertheless, conception of the Divine Names and Attributes is not conception of the Divine Essence, for all conception is begotten of qualities and definitions. God is not begotten.

"If he conceives that he is in love with the Essence of God, conception of the Divine names and attributes is not the essence." 56

God is the Perfect Artist. He is the source of both good and evil, and yet evil does not hurt Him. It is at the demand upon His perfection that He makes

55. Ibid, Vol.II, 1626-27.

کار من به علتت و مستقیم : صفت تقدیر من به علت اے سقیم
عادت خود را بگردانم لوقت : این عبارت از پیش بشام لوقت

56. Ibid, Vol.I, 2757.

گر تو هم می کنی او عشق دات : دات نبود و هم اسما و صفات

evil, for had He not made evil, He would lack skill and cease to be a Perfect artist. The ugliness of script is an exhibition of the ugly by the artist, says Rūmi, it is not the ugliness of the artist. In order that the perfection of His skill might be displayed, God makes both the ugly and the beautiful. The world is fashioned by the hand of Wisdom, says Jāmi, every brick of it bears the impress of His pen. And so, every glorious scene, every fair design, conveys His message to the mind. He says:

"Deep lies the truth impressed on every heart.
The picture certifies the painters' art." 57

And Rūmi says:

"If you say that evils too are from Him, that is true, but how is it a defect in His grace? His bestowing this evil is even His perfection." 58

God is the root of all jealousies. God is jealous of any existence whatsoever, any existence other than Himself. He is all that exists and so he demands that the lovers make Him alone the sole object of desire and lose themselves in Him. "It was the jealousy of God," says Rūmi "and there is no device against God; where is a heart that is not shattered in a hundred pieces by Gods' love?" 59

57. Jāmi: Yusuf and Zulaikha tran. by Ralph T.H. Griffith. p.9.

58. The Mathnawi, Vol.II, 2535-36

وَر تَر گدائی هم بدیها از ویست : یک آن نعمات فضل او گیت
این بدی دادن کمال اوست هم : من مالی گدایت او محشم

59. Ibid, Vol.I, 1712.

The jealousies of mankind proceed from God, who is jealous of anyone who adheres to the world of appearance even after seeing Reality. He guards His saints from the eyes of the vulgar, and the saints in turn conceal the Divine mysteries revealed to them.

"The whole world became jealous because God is superior to all the world in jealousy. The King is jealous of any one who after having seen the face, prefers the (more) scent." ⁶⁰

God is the only real agent, the Ocean of Creative Energy, from whom proceeds all movement and all life. He is the Sea that feeds the foam; He is the wind that raises the dust to the zenith. ⁶¹ The apparent correlation of cause and effect serves to maintain the world order by providing a basis for human activities. Divine action transcends this correlation. Things come to pass according to rule, but God's power breaks the rule, as His Omnipotence can destroy all causes. He allows the execution of His Will to follow the course of

60. Ibid, Vol.I, 1763, 1770.

حمد عالم ذات غیور آمد که حق: بود در غیرت مرین عالم سق
شاه را غیرت بود هر حرکت او: بود گزیند بعد ذات که دید رو

61. Ibid, Vol.VI, 1455-59.

causation to the end, that the seeker may become capable of pursuing his object of desire. If there were no cause, the seeker would have no way to pursue. Causes are films on the eyes. Man should reach beyond these causes, and behold the supreme causer in the spaceless world.

"The Causer brings into existence whatsoever He will: the Absolute Power tears up (destroys) the causes. But, for the most part, He lets the execution of his Will follow the course of Causation in order that a seeker may be able to pursue the object of his desire." 62

God's bringing things into existence can add nothing to His unchangeable perfection, nor does their perishing take anything away from Him. The Divine light is not made greater by being consumed; it remains undiminished. What is increased is the effect, which is the world of appearance. The Essence itself suffers neither increase nor diminution.

God is the Absolute Being, the Universally immanent and the only real 'cause' of all that there is. He comprehends all effects which are the objects of existence.

62. Ibid, Vol. V, 1548-49.

هر چه خواهد آمد مسبب آن دارد .. قدرت مطلق بسیا بر دارد
یکه اغلب بر سبب را در معاد : تا بماند عالمی هستی مُراد

The objects of existence appear under the form of contingency, individualisation and plurality for the purpose of displaying the Divine nature in action. If the Divine Essence were to increase or decrease, it would mean that it is also originated and is subject to causes.

" God was not increased by His bringing the world into existence: that which He was not formerly He has not become now. But the effect (phenomenal being) was increased by His bringing created things into existence; there is a greater difference between these two increases." ⁶³

The diversity of the Divine Attributes and of the archetypal ideas in God's Knowledge determines all actual differences of character and individualisation in the world. God, who has no like or opposite, is the ultimate source of all the opposites proper to the world of appearance. These are the reflections of the Divine Attributes of Beauty and Majesty, Mercy and Wrath. These are the aspects in which God reveals Himself to human minds. Such contradictions, however, are transcended and

63. Ibid, Vol.17: 1666-67.

حق را بجا دجهان افزون شد : آج اول آب نبود اکنون شد
 یک افزون گشت اثر را بجا خلق : در میان این دو افزونست فرق

united in the mystic's vision of Reality. The mystic knows that the infinite Divine perfections include all these contradictions, as he sees by the Light of God.

"Know that both these flow from one origin. Pass on from them both, go all the way to their origin. Now He makes the picture thereon (one of) the Devil, now (of) Adam, now He makes the picture thereon (one of) joy, now (one of) grief." 64

Manifestations, as such, are veils created by God. They are created for a good purpose, for if Divine Beauty were to display itself without a veil man would not enjoy it, nor would he endure it.⁶⁵ What will happen if the sun comes near the world? It will destroy the whole world and every creature on it. But through intermediaries it bestows innumerable benefits on mankind. In its light man walks, sees, distinguishes good from bad and enjoys the fruits that fill the trees and orchards. Likewise, when God reveals Himself through a veil to the mountain He fills it with trees and flowers. But when He makes a revelation without a veil, He over-

64. Ibid, Vol.I, 298, 613.

دان که بن مردود یک اصلی ردت: برگردن ربن بردود و تا اصل آن
گاه نقش دید و گاه آدم کند: گاه نقش شادی و گاه غم کند

65. Arberry (A.J.): Discourses of Rūmī; p.47.

throws the mountain, shattering it to pieces. The beauty in the world is the image of the Eternal Orchard, that flourishes in the heart of Perfect Man. The reflection is like the reflection of boughs in a stream.

Thus, God is ultrasensuous and ultra-rational. He is both everything and nothing; he is everywhere and nowhere. He is rational but beyond reason. All forms emerge from Him and yet He is the Formless. He is the nearest to man, yet so remote that a whole life struggle is required to approach Him. No objective reality can contain him. It is He alone that comprehends all. In the words of Gandhi: "God is Truth and Love; God is ethics and morality; God is fearlessness; God is the source of Light and Life, and yet He is above and beyond all these. God is conscience. He is even the atheism of the atheist." 66

There is nothing that does not proclaim God's presence. Love for God is latent in the Universe. Consequently, everything in the universe obeys God and glorifies God by displaying some or other Divine Attributes in a way that is known to Him and itself alone. Every

66. Gandhi (M.K.): The Supreme Power; pp.26-27.



atom is a part of this whole, and is impelled by love towards this Universal Light whence it sprang. Being different modes of one Divine Being, all existent things are endowed with life. They apprehend their Creator, know Him and worship Him according to the necessity of their original nature. Nevertheless, even if every atom were to proclaim His qualities, they would yet be incapable of unfolding them adequately and completely.

"The glorification of God by inanimate beings will become evident to thee; the doubts suggested by false interpretations will not carry thee away from the truth. Each glorifies Thee in a different fashion, and that one is unaware of the state of this one." 67

All men love God in their inmost hearts. They seek Him and pray to Him. This love is neither infidelity nor faith, for thoughts, being subtle, cannot be judged except by their outward profession. It is only when they flow out of the heart and acquire form and expression, that they gain the names of infidelity of

67. The Mathnawi, Vol. III, 1022, 1496.

ماش تسبیح حادث آیدت .: وسوسه تاویلها بر مابیت
هر یکی تسبیح بر روی دگر .: گوید و از حال آن این سبجبر

faith, good or evil, just as plants are completely devoid of form before they come out of the earth. They acquire fine and delicate appearance only when they grow.

God is in charge of man's heart. He controls his thoughts and his ideas, his fantasies and his suppositions, forming them without material means and uncovering them without effort. Being essentially both the object of worship and the worshipper, God plays the game of worship with Himself. The illusion of individuality, of 'I' and 'Thou', arises out of the interplay of the two opposite aspects, essence and form of God, which are, however, destined to become finally submerged in Him.

"He brings forth purity from defilements, He takes your acts of wrong as faithful performance of duty." 68

Therefore, the man who acknowledges God and the man who denies God both are revealing God continually. It is difficult to establish a thing without denial so that all those who affirm the existence of God and all those who deny His existence go to establish His existence. In so far as the object of praise is one, all religions are

68. Ibid, Vol. III, 347.

اوپر اردو کے درجہ تہا صفا :۔ مرجع احادیث تراویز و دعا



one. The qualities in individuals are nothing but the Divine Attributes reflected in them. Hence all praise is necessarily rendered to God, who reveals Himself in all forms of worship. Even when Iblis disobeyed God by declining to worship Adam, it was from envy which arose from his love of God. It was from fear lest another being become the companion of his Beloved, and not from his denial of obedience to the Divine Command. ⁶⁹

"In as much as the object of praise Himself is not more than One, from this point of view all religions are but one religion. Know that every praise goes (belongs) to the Light of God and is only lent to created form and persons." ⁷⁰

True prayer is the prayer without outward form, and for that reason without beginning or end. Similarly, the profession of faith is not merely the formula uttered by the tongue, because everything expressed in words has beginning and end. The little child gets milk only when it cries. His crying is the reason why he gets milk. Bowing and prostrating in prayer is like the child's cry arousing the compassion of God, which is not confounded

69. Ibid, Vol.II, 2642-43.

70. Ibid, Vol.III, 2124-25.

را آنکه خود مدح بزرگ بیش نیست. : کتبها زین روی بزرگ کیش نیست
چونکه هر مدعی بنور حق رود : بر صورت و اشخاص عاریت بود

with the innumerable roads leading to it. Once the seekers reach the goal, all disputation, all war and all diversity melt away, for the human heart is His abode.

"Cross and Christians, from end to end,
I surveyed; He was not on the Cross,
I went to the idol temple, to the ancient pagoda;
No trace was visible there.
I went to the mountains of Herāt and Candahār;
I looked; He was not in that hill-and-dale.
With set purpose I fared to the Summit of Mount wāf;
In that place was only the 'Anqā's habitation.
I bent the reins of search to the Kā'bā;
He was not in that resort of old and young
I questioned Ibn Sīnā of his state;
He was not in Ibn Sīnā's range.
I fared towards the scene of "two bow-lengths' distance";
He was not in that exalted court
I gazed into my own heart;
There I saw Him; He was nowhere else." 71)

71. Nicholson (R.A.): selected Poems from the Divān-i-Shams-i-Tabriz. xvii. 4-11.

چلیبا و لهرانیان سر سر : بستم و دم اندر چلیبا نبود
به بتخانه رفتم به برکین : درو سچ دگی طویدا نبود
بیکه هر ارمقم و قند طار : بدیم در آن نیر و بالا نبود
بهجه آمدیم بر سر کوه قاف : در آن جای جزای معانی نبود
بکند کشیدیم عنان طلب : در آن مقصد پیر و برنا نبود
بپرسیدیم از این میانش حال : بر انداره این سینا نبود
سوی مطرات قویین شدیم : در آن مارگاه معلا نبود
گه کردم اندر دل خویشتی : در آن جایش دیدم دگر جان بود

Thus, all are doing God's service in the world; some are aware of the fact while others are not. Rūmī would say, it is like people stitching a tent. One man twists the rope, another strikes the pegs, another weaves the covering, so that every one appears to be engaged in a different task. But from the standpoint of weaving they are united and are doing the same job. All hearts have one attachment, one love, the love of God. Man has to realise that his earthly nature is not the original nature, and that he is the image of the Divine to which he shall return.

" If Love shall be thy part
Thou canst not suffer loss, my heart;
Is it so sorrowful
That thou art moving to the Soul?

Thou camest at thy birth
Out of high heaven unto earth:
To heaven at the end
Thou shalt again from earth ascend. 72

* * * *

72. Arberry (A.J.): The Rubaiyāt of Jalāl al-'Dīn Rūmī;
p. 108.

CHAPTER VI.THE IDEA OF SOUL

1. The concept of the soul has engaged man's attention through ages. Opinions differ regarding its existence and nature. The theory of the soul is based on the belief that the principle of individuality in man is substantial and that the psychic phenomena must have a concrete agent to which they belong. This agent must be immaterial, because its activity, which is thought, is immaterial. It must be simple too, for thought is simple. Thus it is immaterial, simple and substantial, and it is called the soul. In this simple spiritual substance inhere all the various psychic faculties and operations; but it itself, being a self-subsistent individual substance, inheres in nothing. In order to know what it is, one must look in upon oneself, and learn by direct intuition what one's own inward being is.

Socrates, Plato and Aristotle presented this substantialist view of the soul. In the middle ages it was formally elaborated, and later many philosophers like Hobbes, Descartes, Locke, Leibnitz and Berkeley believed in it. In the present day the spiritualistic school defends the conception.

Socrates believed that the soul is pure, eternal and imperishable. It is an immaterial spiritual substance which lives in the body, and departs from it at death. What is good for man, he said, is the Tendance of the soul or the health of the soul, and what is good for the soul is the knowledge of the self. The human soul, says Plato, is pure, immortal and indestructible. Being the mediator between the world of Ideas and the world of sense, it has affinity with both of them. It is incorporeal and is the cause of body's motion; the human reason abides in it. As against this, Plotinus holds that soul has a divisible element; and yet, he said, it is immaterial. It is present in the body; but in its faculties of reason, memory and perception it is separable from the body.

But, for Aristotle, the human soul is merely the function of the body; hence, cannot exist without the body. The connection between the soul and the body is organic, and both are, by that reason, inseparable. Nor does the soul incarnate itself in new bodies, as Plato believes, because the function of everything differs from the function of every other thing. However, he does talk of the active reason, which comes to man from God, who is the Absolute Reason. It is therefore, eternal and imperishable. It enters the body, and rejoins God at death.

For Pythagoras and his followers soul has no distinct being of its own. It is the name given to the harmony arising out of bodily elements similar to the harmony existing in the strings of a musical instrument. However, for some, soul exists, but dies along with the body. Again, there are some who believe that even though soul dies with the body, God will create the body once again at the Resurrection and breathe soul into it.

The Upanishads talk of soul as permanent, giving its development through four stages — bodily, empirical, transcendental and absolute. The central teaching of the Upanishads is the 'Ātman' and the identity of the 'Ātman' with the 'Brahman'. Philosophy was, hence, called 'Ātma Vidyā', knowledge of the Self. The Jainas, unlike the Buddhists, accept the existence of soul, which they describe from the phenomenal and the noumenal point of view. From the phenomenal point of view it possesses empirical qualities, experiencing the fruits of Karma. From the noumenal point of view, however, it is pure and perfect, a pure consciousness.

The Biblical conception of soul differs from these foregoing conceptions. The Bible tells us that the soul is God's greatest gift created by Him in His own likeness. He has made it in His likeness by endowing it

with will and understanding. Unlike the body which is material and which has parts, the soul is spiritual and has no parts. It is, for that reason, indivisible and immortal. The body dies, but the soul lives forever. After death it returns to God to share with Him a life of unending happiness in heaven.

The Qurānic conception of soul comes nearer to the Biblical conception. The scripture asserts that God breathed His own spirit into Adam (cxv.29, xxxviii 72, xxxii.9). The soul is created by God, but it is immortal. When the body dies it returns to God well-pleased and well-pleasing, for to God belong the Creation and the Command. Man is essentially a creature; he can be neither identical nor co-eternal with God.

Al-Kindī is the first thinker who introduced the Neo-Platonic doctrine of soul into Muslim thought. He revised "The Theology of Aristotle" through which the muslims came to know the theory of the emanation of the human soul from the One Absolute Cause, first through the Universal Spirit or Intelligence and then through the Universal Soul to which it belongs. Man's soul, thus, is an immortal, spiritual and intelligible substance. Its salvation consists in freeing itself from the bondage of the sensible world and in returning to the eternal abode of spiritual substances.

Al-Ash'ari gives the doctrine of the incarnation of the Divine Spirit in Adam and its transmigration through the prophets. Al-Baghdadi holds that the life of God is without spirit and nourishment and that all other spirits are created. Ibn Hazm uses *nafs* and *rūh* interchangeably for man's soul. He believes that God created in spirits of Adam and his descendants before He commanded the angels to prostrate before Adam.

Al-Shahrastāni describes the nature of man with three souls, vegetative, animal and human, each with its own source, place and powers. He rejects the Neo-Platonic idea that human souls are dependent upon the souls of the superhuman spiritual world, the doctrine that the *nafs* is essentially evil and the doctrine that salvation consists in the release of the soul, *rūh*, from material bodies.

It was Al-Ghazzālī, Islam's greatest theologian, who gave Aristotle's principle of the incorporeal character of spirit a permanent place in Muslim Thought. Ghazzālī defines soul as a spiritual substance, not at all confined in a body nor imprinted on it. It is neither joined to it nor separate from it, and is neither without the world nor within the world. It possesses knowledge and perception and is, therefore, not an accident.



Al-Baidawi discusses the classes of incorporeal substances: the heavenly intelligences, the souls of the spheres, the incorporeality of human souls, their creation, their connection with bodies, and their survival. He argues that the souls were created when the bodies were completed. The nafs is not embodied in the body and is not close to the body, but is attached to it as the lover to the beloved. It is connected with the ruh which comes from the heart and is generated of the finest nutritive particles. The reasoning nafs produces a power that flows in the body. Ibn al'Arabi likewise, divides things into three classes: God, who is the Absolute Being and Creator, the world and the tertium quid of the contingent existence, that is joined to the Eternal Reality and is the source of the substance as well as the specific nature of the world.

The early sufis accepted the materiality of the spirit. Al-Kūshairi and Al-Hūjwiri, for instance, talk of ruh as a fine, created substance, placed in the sensible body. The nafs is the seat of all evil qualities. Man is a combination of both ruh and nafs. But the later sufis could not be satisfied with the idea that the human soul was created. They asserted that there is something in man that is eternal, divine and

somehow identical with God, in spite of the fact that he was created and, by that reason, possesses some phenomenal aspects. This something in man is his soul. This idea has its basis in the Qurān because even though the Qurān speaks in terms of creation, it also says that God breathed His own spirit into Adam. It was easy for the sufis to infer from this that the soul in man is the spirit of God, hence, uncreated. Again, the Qurān makes the Universe subservient to man, and identifies man's action with that of God. This view was developed by the sufis, who asserted that the human and divine wills are capable of absolute identification in such a way that the individual loses his separate existence. Some other sufis advanced a step further and maintained that there is not only the identity of will but also that of essence.

II. Rūmi employs most of these foregoing conceptions in his thought. Besides the Qurān, he has been very much influenced by Greek thought and the Neo-Platonic theory of Emanation, particularly Plotinus' doctrine of the divine origin of the soul, its descent to the material world, its life on earth and its ultimate return to its eternal home. Nevertheless, his thought can hardly be identified with any of these sources.

Rūmi believes that there is a transcendental



self of man which is his real and lasting essence, and that it is his soul. The soul is divine, uncreated, pure, self-subsistent and eternal. It is timeless and infinite, and was one with God, when there was God and nothing beside Him. Being the divine spark within man, it is reality or Truth itself. It has its origin in God and as such, it has no God.

"It hath no head, inasmuch as it existed before eternity; it hath no foot: it has always been akin to everlastingness." ¹

Ghazzālī gives a similar conception. He holds that the human soul was pre-existent before its attachment to the material body. It is the real essence of man, *haqīqat-al-Ādāmī* as he calls it, and it differentiates him from the lower creation. It is divine in origin, immortal, abiding, eternal, self-subsisting and incorruptible. It is God-like and it knows God. ² He explains the words, *nafs*, *rūh* and *Kalb* which are names for this simple substance that is the seat of the intellectual processes. He distinguishes it from the animal *rūh*, which is a refined but mortal body wherein reside

1. The Mathnawī, Vol.I, 2898.

سرشارد چون زانله دوست بیستی: پا نازد با ابد دوست درستی

2. Smith (Margaret): Al Ghazālī, the mystic; pp.141-42.

the senses. The incorporeal ruh is identified with the al-nafs al-mūtma'inna and al-ruh-al-arri of the Qurān. The term nafs is also used by him for the flesh or lower nature, which he deems necessary to be disciplined in the interests of ethics.

Ībn-al'Arabi regards man as an intermediate creation, a barzakh between God and the world, bringing together the Divine Reality and the phenomenal world. He is a vicegerant connecting the eternal names and the original forms. His animal spirit ruh is the divine breathe blown into him, but his reasoning soul comes from the earthly elements.

The Gitā tells us that the soul is unborn, eternal everlasting and primeval; that which is perishable is the body and not the soul. It is divine and free from birth and decay casting off worn out bodies and entering into new ones. In the words of the Gitā -

"The Jivātma (soul) in the body is an eternal portion of Myself: it draws with it the mind and the five senses that rest in Matter." ³

And in the words of Rūmi :

3. The Bhagvadgitā: Ch.XV.vi7

"I was on that day when the Names were not
 Nor any sign of existence endowed with name.
 By me Names and Named were brought to view,
 On the day when there were not 'I' and 'We'." 4

The soul is invisible and unitary in nature. It is indivisible and free from matter. Reality is one although it is revealed in plurality. The souls of men are one, in spite of their multiplicity, as they belong to the One Soul, the One Being of the Supersensuous Realm of Will or Spirit. There is unity in the Ground and Essence of all souls which is the spirit of God breathed into man.

"If you count a hundred apples or a hundred quinces, they do not remain a hundred but become one, when you crush them together. In things spiritual there is no division and no numbers; in things spiritual there is no partition and no individuals." 5

This unity of the spirit is illustrated by Rumi in

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4. Nicholson (R.A.): Selected Poems from the Divan-i-Shams-i-Tabriz IVII; 1-2.

من آن روز بدم که اسما نبود : نشان از وجود صفا بود
 مانند صفا و اسما بدید : در آن روز که انبیا و ما نبود

5. The Mathnawi: Vol. I, 680-81.

گر تو صد سبب و صد آبی بشوی : صد نماز یک شود چون بفری
 در معانی تمت و امید نیست : در معانی تجزیه و افراد نیست

analogies like the Unity of Light. The unity of the spirit is like the unity of light of the two eyes, or like the unity of light in spite of the variety of lamps.

"When you look at the form, your eye is two, look at its (the eye's) light, which grew from the eye. If ten lamps are present in one place, each differs in form from another: To distinguish without any doubt the light of each, when you turn your face towards their light, is impossible."⁶

Plurality belongs to the Realm of Nature, to the phenomenal world, wherein forms are produced by the manifestation of the diverse attributes of the Real Being. These forms are like shadows, which owe their existence to sunlight falling on wall. Just as the single light of the Sun becomes divided into a hundred in relation to the walls on which it falls, the One Soul shines through the innumerable bodies. Remove the walls, and all lights are one. In the words of Rūmī multiplicity of the souls is like the multiplicity of the waves caused by the wind.

6. Ibid, Vol.I; 676-79.

چون بصورت بگری چشم تو دست :: تو بنورش درنگز چشم است
 ده چراغ ارحام آید در مکان :: هر یکی باشد بصورت غیر آن
 فرق توان کرد نور هر یکی :: چون بنورش روی آری بی شک



Divine Light cannot be broken up; and God sprinkled it upon all. All are one substance like the Sun and all are pure like water.

" Their numbers are in the likeness of waves; the wind will have brought them into number (into plurality from unity). The Sun, which is the spirits, became separated (broken into rays) in the windows, which are bodies." ⁷

Gandhi gives a similar conception. For him there is the absolute oneness of human soul just as there is the absolute oneness of God. Men have many bodies but the soul is one. The rays of the Sun are many but their source is one. And is not God the underlying Unity of the variety of phenomenon? "No two leaves are alike," he says, "yet there is no antagonism between them or between the branches on which they grow." ⁸

Every human soul existed as an idea in the Divine Mind, before the creation of the world. The Perfect Men are the universal individualisations to whom all other souls are inferior and sub-ordinate. All prophets

7. Ibid. Vol.II, 185-86.

برهانال موجها اعدادشان : در عدد ۱ درده باشد بدیشان
منتزق شده متابه جا یا : در درون روزن ابدایا

6. Gandhi (M.K.): The Supreme Power; pp.2-3.

and saints are Perfect Man, who are essentially one with God and with each other. It is through them alone that the hidden nature of God is revealed; they differ only in so far as they manifest diverse attributes of God. They can be treated as different individuals - one superior to another - only from this point of view, for God Himself says: 'We make no distinction between any of them.'

"The faithful are numerous; but the faith is one: their bodies are numerous, but their soul is one. 'Twas the epoch of Jesus and the turn was his: he was the soul of Moses and Moses the soul of him." 9

"Deem the soul a unit and the body a hundred thousand numbers,
Even as almonds in the form of oil
How many words are there in the world! Yet all
are essentially one;
Water becomes one when you break the jars." 10

The soul is the substance; the phenomena are its attributes. For Rumi the objective universe is

9. The Mathnawi: Vol.IV, 408; Vol.I, 325.

مومنان معہ ودیک ایمان یکی : صفتان معہ ودیکیں بان یکی
عہد عیسٰی بود ولذبت آن او : ہاں موسیٰ او و موسیٰ بان او

10. Nicholson (R.A.): Selected Poems from the Divan-i-Shams-i-Tabriz; pp.272-73.

روح یکی دان و تن گشتہ عہد صد ہزار : صیحو کہ بانا بہادر صفت روحانی
چند لغت در چہاں حمد معنی یکی : آبہ یکی گشت چوں ماہ تابشانی

merely the back of the mirror whose face is the soul.
As such, the soul is the substance while the world is
the accident, a mere shadow and its reflection. Being
black on one side with the darkness of not-being this
mirror reflects Reality perfectly.

"Hence the heart is the substance, and the
world is the accident: How should the heart's
shadow (reflection) be the object of the
heart's desire? ^{all}

The heavens and the earth are the embodiment of
man's transcendental ideas and they serve his purpose.
The movement of water from above to below, and from below
to above again, says Rūmi, the journey of wheat into the
earth, and its springing up again, the entering of the
seed into the earth and its raising its head again, are
all blessings of God sent down to earth in order that
they may become the nutriment of the soul. ¹²

"From thy good thoughts are born the boys of
Paradise and the houris,
From thy evil thoughts is born the great demon
(Iblis).

11. The Mathnawi; Vol.III, 2266.

پس لودل دهر و عالم مرض : ساینه دل چون لودل دافرض

12. *Ibid*, 457-58.





See how the secret thought of the geometrician
has become a castle or a palace,
See how the hidden Providence without beginning
has become this mighty Universe." 13

The soul is not limited by space and time. The realm of the soul transcends all direction and all time which are merely the phenomenal categories of understanding. They are the source of causation and change of all 'hows' and 'whys', which are not applicable to the Noumenal Realm to which the soul belongs. Its fall is due to the process of individualisation of the Absolute, which transcends the world of time and space.

" 'Below' and 'above', 'before' and 'behind' are attributes of the body: The essence of the bright spirit is without direction (not limited by relation of place)."

" The world of creation is endued with diverse quarters and directions, but know that the world

13. Nicholson (H.A.): Selected Poems from the Divan-i-Shams-i-Tabriz, p.337.

را ده از اندیشه‌های خوب تو و لایق و دور: زاده از اندیشه‌های رشت تو دلیکلاک
سز و اندیشه مهدی بین شده قهر و سزا: سز تقدیر از لایق شده چندین باب

of the Divine Command and Attributes is without (beyond) direction." 14

This child of eternity is the possessor of infinite knowledge, knowing everything before it is clothed into materiality. It beholds wine in grapes, says Rumi, and it beholds intoxication even before the creation of garden and vine. It, in fact, beholds thing in nothing, the conditioned in the unconditioned.

" The Spirit is associated (endued) with knowledge and reason: What has the Spirit to do with Arabic and Turkish?" 15

The soul essentially belongs to the world of Unity, the realm of colourlessness although it descends into the world of colour and exhibits the diversity of the Divine Attributes. It manifests itself in different modes of being, as it perpetually receives a fresh influx of Divine Grace from the Divine Essence. Its experiences in the world are the manifestation of the all-embracing Divine Knowledge and Power.

14. Ibid. Vol.I, 2008; Vol.IV; 3692.

زیر و بالا پیش و پس وصف تن است. بی جهت آن ذات جان روشن است
عالم خلقت با سوی و جهات. بی جهت آن عالم امروصفت

15. Ibid. Vol.II, 56.

روح با علمیت و با عقلیت یار. روح را تا زنی و ترک چه کار

"I have circled awhile with the nine Fathers
in each heaven,

For years I have revolved with the stars in
their signs.

I was invisible awhile, I was united with Him,
I was in the kingdom of or nearer, I saw what
I have seen.

I have my nourishment from God, like a child
in the womb;

Man is born once, I have been born many times."¹⁶

The soul not only bestows life on the body but also destroys it by its departure. The destruction of the body, however, does not affect this self-subsisting substance. Rūmī, therefore, compares the soul to fire latent in flint and steel. The body, he says, is a drop of water in comparison with the Sea of Spirit which transcends and subdues it.¹⁷

16. Nicholson (R.A.): Selected Poems from the Divān-i-Shams-i-Tabriz; pp.331-32.

ما به پردر نظر ملک یکچند دوران کرده ام : ما احتضار در رحمتان سا با گردیده ام
یکچند ما پیدا بدم ماو بهم یکجا بدم : در ملک او ادنی بدم دیدم حرا پنجه دیده ام
ما به لعل اندر شکم پرورش دارم رقی : یکبار زاید آدمی من بار طراز آیدم ام

17. The Mathnawi: Vol.IV, 1820.



Thus, the soul is the meeting point of the phenomenal and the intelligible. It imposes form on matter which is nothing but pure indetermination. Matter is not an independent substance but only an aspect of the soul — a lower grade of the soul. It is the lowest form of existence, the lowest form of life, and, as such, not essentially dead. Body is a product of the soul, an instrument manufactured by it to serve its own purposes.

"Wine in ferment is a beggar suing for our ferment; Heaven in revolution is a beggar suing for our consciousness. Wine became intoxicated with us, not we with it; the body came into being from us, not we from it. We are^{as} bees, and bodies are as wax (honey comb): We have made the body, cell by cell, like wax." 18

The soul derives to a certain extent the element of impurity in itself from its association with the body. It, nevertheless, maintains its natural purity and tries ceaselessly to purify the human nature reminding man of the melodies of the past. The water is

18. Ibid. Vol.I, 1811-13.

ماده درجوشی گدای جوش ما: چرخ درگردش گدای جوش ما
 ماده ارماسه شدی ماز او: قالب ارماسه شدی ماز او
 مازور نوریم و قالبها درموم: خانه خانه کرده قالبه راچو موم

polluted and defiled, and yet, it retains its natural property of purity. "Although the water and earth of our bodies have caused doubt to fall upon us", says Rami, "something of those melodies comes back to our memory."¹⁹

It is the soul of the perfect Man alone that is completely free from the influence of body. His soul bathes his body in the Eternal Light of God and illumines it in the mystical union in such a way that he is transformed into Absolute Spirit.

"Not idly, therefore, the great mystics said this:
"The body of the holy ones is essentially pure as
their spirit. Their speech and soul and form,
all is absolute spirit without external spirit."²⁰

The Universal Soul is the first emanation from God, comprehending and including the particular, individual souls, in whom it reveals itself. The first soul determines the character and actions of the individual soul, which is an individualisation and manifestation of the Universal Soul. Under its influence, the indivi-

19. Ibid. Vol.IV, 837.

20. Ibid. Vol.I, 2000-2001.

پس بزرگات این گفتند از عرف : جسم پاکان عین جان افتاد صاف
گشتان و نشتان و نقششان : : حله جان مطلق آ مدی نشان

-dual soul becomes the perfect soul, being imbued with its qualities in its spiritual evolution.

"Since there are consciousnesses beyond this bodily nature in that spiritual arena these sensual souls are like inanimate matter. The first Soul is the theatre of the Divine court; the Soul of the soul is verily the theatre of God Himself." 21

The human soul possesses a triple nature which comprises the three stages of perfection. The first is the lowest stage wherein the animal soul or the carnal soul, rūh-i-haiwāni dwells. The animal soul is a product of the four elements and their nature, dryness, moisture, heat and cold. It is, therefore, closely tied up with the body and cannot endure without it. It has come into existence, and has become the vital element in man through the influence of the rational soul, rūh-i-insāni.

In the second stage there is the rational soul, rūh-i-insāni, which, with its distinctively human characteristic of reasoning, is in contradiction to the animal

21. Ibid. Vol. VI, 151-152.

چون خبر صفت بیرون زین نهاد : با شدن ما بهادرات میاد
جان اول مظہر درگاہ شد : جان ثان خود مظہر اللہ شد

soul. The rational soul comes from God. It is the soul of goodness, and is higher than everything that has corporeal basis.

"Besides the understanding and soul which is in the ox and the ass, Man has another intelligence and soul. It is higher than feminine and masculine: this is not that spirit which is composed of dryness and moisture. This is not that spirit which is increased by eating bread or which is sometimes like this and sometimes like that." 22

The third is the super-human part of the human soul, the transcendental soul, rūh-i-qūdsi, in which stage man thinks according to the higher intelligence with which he has become identical. He possesses perfect knowledge by intuition rather than by the aid of discursive reason. The prophets and saints possess this transcendental spirit; they are the Divine Intelligences.

"Again in the owner of that Divine breath there is a soul other than the human soul and

22. Ibid. Vol.IV, 409; Vol.I, 1976-77.

نیر فہم و جان کہ در گاو و فرست : آدی را عقل و جان دیگرست
از موش و رزمگر برترست : این نہ آن جاست کہ حرکت و ترست
این نہ آن جاست کہ فرایہ رنات : یا گئی باشد چنین گاهی چنان

intelligence. O thou that hast gone to sleep
in the body's boat, thou hast seen the water,
but look on the Water of the water." 23

This distinction given by Rūmi between the three parts of the soul is similar to the distinction made by the Jainas between Bahirātman, Antarātman and Paramātman. Plato gives a similar conception. The soul, he says, is divided into two parts, one part of which is again divided into two. The top most part is the rational part of the soul. It is reason, simple and indivisible; it is indestructible and eternal; and it apprehends the ideas. The other part is the irrational part of the soul. It is mortal and is subdivided into the noble irrational and the ignoble irrational. All noble emotions belong to the noble irrational part, while all sensuous appetites belong to the ignoble irrational part. Man alone is the possessor of all the three parts of the soul. Animals possess the two lower parts and plants only the appetitive soul.

Aristotle talks of the vegetative, the animal and the rational parts of the soul, although he maintains

23. Ibid. Vol.IV, 410 and Vol.III, 1273.

باز میرجان و عقل آدمی : صفت بای در ولی آب آدمی
ای نودر کشتی تن رفته بخواب : آب را دیدی بگرد آب آب

that it is not correct to talk of the parts of the soul. The soul is single and indivisible, and has no parts. What are called parts are only different aspects of the activity of one and the same thing. The vegetative or the nutritive soul is possessed by plants, which belong to the lowest grade in the organic kingdom. They nourish themselves, grow and propagate their own kind. Above the plants are animals which possess sensation, in addition to the functions of nutrition and propagation possessed by plants. They, therefore, possess both the nutritive and the sensitive souls. Next in the scale of being is man, whose proper and essential activity is reason. His soul is nutritive, sensitive and rational. The stream of thought, says, W. James, has two parts — 'Me' and 'I'. The 'Me' is the empirical self of man which includes in itself all material possessions, his bodily existence, his friends and the like — in fact all empirical things objectively known. The 'I' is not such an aggregate of material things although it knows them. It is a 'Thought' that includes in itself all the experiential facts.

Now, Nafs, the carnal soul, lies intermediate between the body and the rational soul. It should be disciplined so that it is changed from nafs-i-ammārah, the commanding soul, to nafs-i-lavvāmā, the reproaching soul,

which whispers the voice of conscience. From this stage it should further rise to that of *nafs-i-mūtma'inna*, the tranquil soul. This is the achieved through moral purification and through the realisation of Truth. *Nafs* and *Rūh* thus characterise the two aspects of man, the former characterising his lower self, which belongs to the *Ālam-i-khalq*, the Realm of Creation^{and} the latter his higher self, which belongs to *Ālam-i-amr*, the Realm of Will.

The transformation of the lower self enhances the spiritual faculties of man. In the beginning when man was an embryo his food was blood. This very embryo later on became a taker of milk, then a taker of solid food, finally developing into a full fledged personality. A similar evolution takes place in the self of man wherein his lower self is completely changed to the effect that his spiritual self, which is his true self, is endowed with increased spiritual faculties. Man is potentially capable of contemplating God; and unless this transformation takes place, his inward eye, which is the eye of the Eternal Light, is not opened. It alone is the real eye without which he cannot be truly said to see.²⁴

24. Ibid. Vol.III, 43.

The animal spirit is indispensably connected with the body. The human body is like a lamp, whose light is the animal soul. The human body is entirely dependant upon secondary causes and cannot endure without food and sleep, without nutriment; so also the animal spirit which vanishes from the body as soon as it dies as light vanishes from the lamp without wick and oil. These hundred lamps are separate from one another. In the words of Rūmi, one is extinguished, the other still burning; one is dim, another bright.

"The animal soul does not possess oneness: seek not thou this oneness from the airy vital spirit."

"At night a lamp is placed in every house, in order that by its light they (the inmates) may be delivered from darkness. That lamp is like this body, its light like the animal soul; it requires a wick and this and that." 25

Consequently, one who looks at the multiplicity of the bodies, to which the animal soul belongs, doubts the unity of spirit. Do not keep your gaze upon the lamp,

25. Ibid. Vol.IV, 411, 425 and 426.

جان حیوانی ندارد اتحاد : تو مجبورین اتحاد از روح باد
سبب هر خانه چراغی می نهند : تا بورتان رطبت می رهند
آن چراغ این تن بد در نورش بد جان : هست محتاج قندیل و بن قوت



says Rūmī, lest you will be involved in plurality. Gaze upon the light so that you are delivered from all plurality.²⁶

Nevertheless, Rūmī does not exclude the existence of a plurality of souls, which for him do possess a particularly unique existence. These particular souls are the animal souls in men, set against the human spirit breathed into man by God.²⁷

We do not know how the soul gets separated from God, for the ultimate relation between the soul and God is incomprehensible. The soul, however, is conscious of its fall from God. Its life is, hence, nothing but an endeavour at self-realisation, which is the realisation of its original unity with God. All life is a journey back to Him, who is the beginning and the end of everything, for "To Him do we return". In the words of Rūmī, "our journey is to the rose garden of union."²⁸

God has a purpose of His own in embodying the soul into the body. Just as formless idea is put into words, in order that these words may convey meaning to

26. Ibid. Vol.III, 1256-57.

27. Ibid. Vol.II, 168.

28. Nicholson (R.A.): Selected Poems from the Divān-i-Shams-i-Tabriz: II, 12.

چہ جای عواصای مرثی و ملک :۔ بگلزار و صلت سیران ما

people, similarly, the creation of man serves to give form and expression to God's idea of Himself. Furthermore, He has bestowed benefits on man himself and by doing so He has enabled him to reflect the Divine Attributes. He has endowed man with spiritual perception so that he may attain to real knowledge of God. Man has to understand the purpose of God before he can see the significance of the body in connection with the soul. The soul is the abode of God; it is the window, ever reflecting the all-pervading Divine Light. It is the mirror of God that contains the image of God.

"He said, "O Umar, what was the wisdom and mystery of imprisoning that pure one (the spirit) in this dirty place? He (Umar) said, "Thou art making a profound inquiry; thou hast imprisoned the free (unconditioned) meaning in a word. This thou hast done for a benefit; He from whom every benefit was born, how should He not see that which was seen by us? There are myriads of benefits, and every myriad is but a few beside that one. The breath of thy speech became beneficial: why, then, is the whole of the whole (the universal connection of spirit and body) devoid of benefit? " 29

But in its earthly abode the soul has become unconscious of God, of the world of Reality whence it

29. The Mathnawi. Vol.I, 1515-22.

sprang. Even though distinct from the phenomenal world, it has wrongly identified itself with it. Like a dreamer it suffers from the illusion that this world is permanent. Like the embryo, that does not believe the person who tells it that there is the world of gardens, orchards and fields outside its abode, a sky full of light, the sun and the moon, it does not believe that there exists another world far better than the present one. It has become blind, as it has seen nothing but darkness. It has forgotten its original state that it pre-existed with adam and lived in Paradise. Plato's prisoner, in his allegory of the cave, also would be as incredulous as this embryo, if he is told that there is a world better and more real than what he is beholding. The soul of the Perfect Man alone is delivered from the bondage of sense. His free soul always endeavours to awaken all the imprisoned souls to their fallen state.

"The man who has lived in a city many years, as soon as his eye goes asleep, beholds another city full of good and evil; and his own city comes not into his memory at all. He thinks that he has always lived in this very city and has been born and bred in it. What wonder, then, if the spirit does not remember its ancient abodes, which have been its dwelling place and birth place

afore-times, since this world, like sleep, is covering it over like clouds cover the stars? "30

Nevertheless, the soul does get reminiscences of the past, as it is freed every night from the bondage of the body, of the world, and its limiting attributes. From this cage, says Rumi, sleep releases the soul, wherein the prisoners forget their prison, and the rulers their power. There is no sorrow and no pain, no idea of gain or loss, in fact no consciousness of the world and its affairs. This is the state of the soul in sleep every night, when it flies back to its natural home. The soul of the Perfect Man alone enjoys this state even when awake. In fact, every soul endeavours to attain to it as its own perfect state, for the soul is a pure substance of which the world and its phenomena are the attributes. In order to get its pure essence back, such an abstraction from all these false attributes is necessary. Even though it dwells on earth it belongs to the garden of the spirit. It grows from God, and to Him shall it return.

"If thou hast formerly laughed in that earthly garden; yet thou art the rose of the garden of the spirit and the spiritual eye."

30. Ibid. Vol.IV, 3628-33.

"We all have been parts of Adam, we have heard those melodies in Paradise."

"By God, thou grewest from His (God's) attributes in the beginning: go back nimbly and fleetly into His attributes." 31

III. Real perfection of the soul, therefore, consists in advancing endlessly towards God. It traverses the circle of existence, which begins in God and ends in God, through its downward journey to the elements, and then through its upward journey back to God. It has to pass through certain phases of being and experience certain states before it completes its evolution. The soul undergoes this experience because God desired to be known and behold Himself objectively in a mirror that reflects all His Attributes. The soul is that mirror which combines in itself both the active and necessary, passive and contingent aspects of Being.

Rûmi here propounds his doctrine of evolution, and anticipates the consummation of all things in their ultimate return to their eternal home. Being more con-

31. Ibid. Vol. III, 4179; Vol. IV; 736; Vol. III, 4182.

سر آت بتان اگر خد یدہ :۔ لاک بتان جان و دیدہ
ما صمہ اجزای آدم بدہ ایم :۔ در بہشت آن لحنہما بشنودہ ایم
در صفاتش رست و نیکو نعت :۔ در صفاتش مار و چالاک و جیت

-cerned with the problem of development, he regards this consummation as taking place through a process of evolution.

The conception was foreign to Semitic religions, which believed that creation took place in six days, and that it took place out of nothing. Medieval Christianity believed that creation took place six thousand years ago. For the Greeks, however, the world was eternal, and there was no upward movement in the world, that would ensue in the development of life. Nor does the Indian system of philosophy present only evolutionary doctrine. It is the transmigration of souls that seems to be the nucleus of all speculation. Although it contains the idea of transmutation of species, it does not approach the idea of natural development. For man, according to it, may be born as a bird or as an animal in his next birth, which scheme is quite different from any scheme of development from the lower to the higher.

Plato postulated the possibility of the soul reincarnating itself in the body of a being lower than its present one, although he maintained at the same time that the soul's life in the world is a ceaseless endeavour to return to its original home. The soul goes back to this blissful abode, the world of Ideas only if man

leads a good life in this world by cultivating the knowledge of Ideas. There are severe penalties for the evil doers; man may be born as an animal, if he lives an utterly sensual life.

It is in Plotinus alone that we can find something that can be developed into a theory of evolution. For him the continuous chain of life holds an hierarchy of beings emanating from the One, every stage in the hierarchy being lower than the preceding one. Nevertheless, even the lowest stage strives to return to the original source, the one, so that there is a continuous upward movement through the circle of Becoming. But this eternal Becoming is not a process in time; for there is an eternal repetition of these infinite series. Everything has a fixed place in the hierarchy, receiving its share of perfection from the being preceding it. Hence, in his scheme there is no place for transformation of beings.

In Islam, however, different thinkers, the authors of *Īkhwān al-safā*, Naẓẓām, and the like, developed their own theories of Evolution. Naẓẓām believed that creation took place with infinite possibilities and potentialities, and that it took place only once. Creation

is the gradual realisation of these latent potentialities. Ībn Miskwaih, gives the doctrine in clear terms. According to him, the mineral kingdom was produced by the combination of primary substances. The inorganic matter developed into the lowest form of plant life like grass which again developed into its highest forms with leaves and flowers. Plant life entered animal life, which later developed to become man.

Nūmi must have assimilated these foregoing conceptions. Although the germs of the doctrine are found in his predecessors, the conception produced by him strikes one as most original product of his own mind. Rūmi believes that life proceeds according to a process of evolution, a process of assimilation of the lower into the higher. The soul is a mode of Divine Being and its inherent potentialities are developed and exhibited through its descent into the world of matter. After its descent into the material world, it gradually develops to higher and higher forms, and ascends from the lowest phase of its life to the highest, finally attaining to the utmost perfection and realising its essential unity with God.

The soul started its existence as matter, in which state it lived for a long time, moving about to and

fire. This was the first form of existence in the world of appearance.

"Hundreds of thousands of years I was flying to and fro involuntarily like the motes in the air." 32

It then lived as fire and water, as wind and cloud, before it got itself assimilated by plant life and passed into plant life.

"From the day when thou comest into existence, thou wert fire or air or earth." 33

The plant became animal by getting itself assimilated by animal life, which, again, dying to its animality, assumed a higher life and became man. Now, whither shall man rise? He shall rise higher and higher in his ascent to the world of angels. From this stage again he is destined to rise above, far above the realm of imagination, to his eternal home-God. Had the soul remained in one condition, it would never have reached its present heights, nor will it be able to rise to its source.

32. Ibid. Vol.VI, 220.

صد هزاران سال لودم درمطار: : همچو ذرات صوابی اختیار

33. Ibid. Vol.V, 749.

تو از آن روزی که در صفت آمدی: آتشی یا باد یا خاک بدی

From the moment you came into the world of being,
A ladder was placed before you that you might escape.
First you were mineral, later you turned to plant
Then you became animal: how should this be a secret
to you?

Afterwards you were made man, with knowledge, reason,
faith;

Behold the body, which is a portion of the dustpit,
how perfect it has grown !

When you have travelled on from man, you will
doubtless become an angel;

After that you are done with this earth: your
station is in heaven

Pass again even from angelhood: enter that ocean
That your drop may become a sea which is a hundred
seas of 'Oman

Leave this 'Son', say over 'One' with all your soul;
If your body has aged, what matter, when the soul
is young? 34

34. Nicholson (H.A.): Selected Poems from the Divan-i-
Shams-i-Tabriz; xii. 6-11.

ز آن دم که آمدستی اندر جهانِ هستی
پیشته که تا برستی به پناه نردباشتی
اول جاد بودی آخر سات گشتی
آنکه شدی تو حیوان این بر تو چون پباشتی
گشتی از آن پس انسان با علم و عقل و ایمان
نکته کل شد آن تن که خروخاکه انست
رسان چو سیر کردی یی شکسته فرشته گردی
ی این زمین از آن پس حایت برسماست
باز از فرشتگی هم نگر مرو در آن دم
با قله تو عمری گردد که صد محاست
بگذر از این حوله تو بیکو زجان احد تو
گر دیر گشت جنت چه غم چو جان تو است

This evolution of the higher from the lower or the transition of the lower into the higher is on account of the inner necessity of the lower to perfect itself. It is the divine urge, the will to live, inherent in every atom of the Universe that drives the lower to assimilate itself into the higher. The diverse modes of being of the soul indicate that nothing becomes less by dying. The diverse modes of being of the soul indicate that nothing becomes less by dying. The higher develops by assimilating the lower, thereby raising the lower. The corn-seed becomes bread, which again, when eaten and assimilated, produces man endowed with reason and spirit. Thus in death is concealed growth. Rumi observes :

"When the throat of an animal is cut duly in the manner prescribed by law there grows from it the throat of man, and its excellence is increased. When a martyred man's throat is cut, consider what the result will be ! A third throat will be born and care of it will be taken by the sherbet of God. The throat that has been cut drinks the Divine sherbet, but only the throat has been delivered from Nay and has died in Yea." ³⁵

35. The Mathnawi: Vol.I, 3873-76.

"Know death to be the thing signified by what the Mohammeden community are agreed upon, namely, that the Water of Life is hidden in the Land of Darkness." 36

The soul mixes with the elements of particular species thereby producing the special characteristics of that species. Thus, the vegetative soul has self-maintenance as its special characteristic, and the animal soul, which is the offspring of the vegetative soul, possesses those of self-maintenance and self-perpetuation. The human soul, which comes from the animal soul and which is endowed with reason, possesses in addition to these the ability to know the things in the world.

The soul, however, does not remember its previous state from which it has descended, but does entertain within itself an inclination towards that state, an unconscious desire for it, a desire it does not understand; and even gains often a faint realisation of that state through phenomena that remind it of the past. Thus, although the animal soul has become forgetful of its previous vegetative state, the flowers and herbs in spring

36. Ibid. Vol.III, 3907.

مرگه دهن آنگ اتفاق است. : کتاب حیوانی نبات در ظلمات

time awaken in it subconscious memories associated with that state. The human soul also is reminded of its animal state in the same way. This conception of Rūmī is similar to the modern conception of Collective Unconscious and heredity. It is also similar to saṃskāra, the accumulated traces and dispositions in Indian Philosophy. In the words of Rūmī:

"First he came into the clime of inorganic things and from the state of inorganic things he passed into the vegetable state. Many years he lived in the vegetable state and did not remember the inorganic state. And when he passed from the vegetable into the animal state, the vegetable state was not remembered by him at all, save only for the inclination which he has towards that state, like the inclination of babes towards their mothers: it (the babe) does not know the secret of its desire for being suckled. 37

The soul's present state of humanity marks the end of the perceptible stages, marātib-i-mahawisā, in the scale of existence. Leaving it behind the soul enters the vast Ocean of Reality and passes through the traceless imperceptible stages without sign and name in its flight towards the Unity.

37. Ibid. Vol.IV, 3637-41.

"These foot-prints extend as far as the shore of the Ocean; then the foot-prints disappear in the Ocean, because from Divine precaution the resting places appointed for the traveller on the dry land are like villages and dwellings and caravansarys. On the contrary, the resting places of the Ocean, when its billows swell, have no floor or roof to shelter the traveller during his stay and detention. These oceanic stages have no visible beacon; these resting places have neither sign nor name." 38

Rūmī seems to anticipate Darwin in his evolutionary concepts. But there are fundamental differences between the mystic and the naturalist. Rūmī's conception, as that of Darwin, neither begins with naturalism nor ends with it. For Rūmī the universe is the outward form of the spirit, quite different from the scientist's universe which consists of atoms. Nothing is dead, even matter, as it is the first and the lowest form of life "Air and earth and water and fire, he says, "are God's

38. Ibid. Vol.V, pp2-805.

تالیف مبین نشان پادشاه است .: پس نشان پادشاه بحر است
 ز آنک منزلهائی خنکی را حسیاط .: صفت دهنها و وطنها و رباط
 بار منزها لے دریا در وقوف .: وقت صبح و جس کی عرصه و سقوط
 نیست پیدائش مراحل راست .: نه نشانست آن منازل را نه نام

slaves; with you and me they are dead, but with God they are alive." 39

Again, for Darwin the impelling force behind evolution is the struggle for existence which pervades the universe, and which leads to natural selection. Rūmi also talks of this struggle in the universe — the struggle between atom and atom, between part and part-. All life is a perpetual struggle — a struggle of words against deeds, of faith against infidelity, in fact of all contradictory forces. Even man is struggling with himself, with his mental and bodily states mutually opposed to each other. This struggle is the very constitution of the universe, for creation itself is based on opposition. Creation is the principle of opposition taking objective form. Eternal peace can be found only in the realm of Spirit, which is divine and which transcends all opposition.

" This world is all at strife, mote with mote,
as religion with infidelity. One mote is flying
to the left and another to the right in search.
War of nature, war of action, war of speech —
there is a terrible conflict amongst the

39. Ibid, Vol.I, 838.

اد و جاک و آتش سده اند : ماسن و تو سمرده ماسن زنده اند



parts of the universe. This world is maintained by means of war. The edifice of creation is based upon contraries. Consequently, we are at war for weal and woe. My state of mind and body are mutually opposed."⁴⁰

But this struggle is not the force underlying the process of evolution. For Rumi there is no passive and mechanical natural selection. Development means assimilation into the higher, which process results in the creation of an ever increasing need for expansion. The universe is a process of constant movement, constant struggle for self-fulfilment and self-development, a perpetual dying to live. It is this internal impulse to live a fuller life that drives matter to organise itself into a vegetable organism, from which again it ensues a transition to animal life, and then to humanity. Evolution, thus, is creative. In this idea Rumi seems to anticipate Bergson, whose 'Elan Vital' is the will to live a higher and fuller life. Rumi does not stop at man as Darwin does.

Creation is the separation of the lover from the Beloved, a descent of the uncreated soul from God. The

40. Ibid, Vol.VI, 36-38 and 46-51.

How and why of this descent is beyond the grasp of reason. However, the soul tries to go back to its Eternal beloved, and evolution is its ascent to the Beloved. It is the descent of God to man, the ascent of man to God and the establishment of the original identity between the two.

For Ibn Rushd it is Intellect that is universal and eternal. Its manifestation in the finite egos is nothing but a temporary phase of its existence. Intellect, therefore, as it appears in the finite egos never dies. Bergson talks of *Elan Vital*, which is the immortal principle of all existence, manifesting itself in ever new forms and individuals. The forms may vanish, but there is no cessation or loss to itself because it is eternal and continuous with its unbreakable process of new manifestations.

Nietzsche's conception of immortality is based on the scientific hypothesis that energy is never lost. Nothing, not even death, can cause the dissipation of energy. The amount of energy is fixed, and the various combinations of energy centres lose their unity only to regain it after a time. It is evident that this doctrine of Eternal Recurrence hardly speaks of individual immortality. Like Ibn Rushd's conception of Intellect, which leads to the immortality of the human race, this argument



leads to the immortality of energy and the process of its eternal recurrence in finite centres.

Kant affirms personal immortality. He argues that man should pursue the Highest Good which comprises two elements, perfect virtue and perfect happiness. Now, the realisation of this Highest Good is not possible in this short span of life. It is, therefore, necessary that we must postulate immortality which implies permanent existence and infinite progress of the individual.

Iqbal admits that man has grown out of the evolutionary process, and that there is no end to evolution. Life, he says, would be unbearable, if we suppose that man and the universe have reached the final point of evolution, because the Ego is immortal and free.

Rumi approaches his idea of progressive immortality also from the standpoint of development. Sufism had developed the conception of impersonal immortality long before him, but the idea of progressive immortality is original with him. In his transcendental aspect man is eternal and immortal; so also in his existence in the world of space and time. He is capable of progressive immortality, every death being a stepping stone to a higher life.

Love is the impelling force that starts and sustains this process of evolution. Love is the inner necessity behind all movement. There is a perpetual striving of all towards God, the Eternal Beauty who is the origin of all. Love actualises this striving, this movement and this progress, so that even the meanest thing of creation assumes various forms, rising higher and higher in the scale of perfection, and finally to God, who is the motive force in the whole process.

" Oh, alas for my bird of goodly flight, that has flown from my end (my last state) to my beginning (my first state). " 41

It is love, therefore, that moves and transforms the soul. This love is a reflexion of Divine Love, an attraction exerted by God, the Universal Whole, upon its parts. The transformed soul is the soul of the Perfect Man which, evolving through lower forms of soul life, finally manifests itself completely in him. The soul takes wings to God, says Rūmī, like a fish that leaps into the water from the dry land as soon as the sound of waves reaches it and like a falcon that flies to the King as soon as it hears the notice of "Return".

41. Ibid. Vol.I, 1708.

ای دیباغ خوش پرواز من : ز اشتیا پریده تا آسمان

Fly, fly, O bird, to thy native home,
 For thou hast escaped from the cage, and thy
 pinions are outspread
 Travel away from the bitter stream towards
 the water of life,
 Return from the vestibule to the high seat
 of the soul." 42

* * * *

42. Nicholson (N.A.): Selected Poems from the Divān-i-Shams-i-Tabriz; III.6.7.

بهر پر حله ای مرغ معدن خویش
 که از قفس بر صیدی و باز شد پرو مال
 از آب بشور سر کن بسوی آب حیات
 رجوع کن بسوی صدر جان زرقفِ نغال

CHAPTER VII

L O V E.

I. To assume the qualities of God, to become one with God, is the ultimate end of the soul. To attain to this end it has to undertake a pilgrimage — the flight of the Alone to the Alone, as Plotinus calls it; 'to return' as Rūmī would have it.

What is the force that draws the Soul to God, so that it becomes one with God? What is the force that releases the soul from its phenomenal manifestation and drives it to realise its original nature? Rūmī says that force is Ishq or Love. A Supreme Ruler of man's destiny, Love is the great impelling force that surges in on him, works on him, transmutes him and elevates him.

The problem of reaching the Highest through Love has been a perennial problem in religious philosophy. In Indian as well as in Western thought Love of God is the means of self-realisation. The Bible and the Qurān talk of it, the Bhagavadgītā and the Upanisads emphasise it, as also the various saints and philosophers who have advocated it down through the ages.

The evolutionists find it difficult to imagine that a God of Love ordains and witnesses the struggle for existence, life for them being nothing more than the survival of the fittest and the extinction of the unfit. It is evident that their conception of life does not interpret the struggle for existence, because the whole range of life bears witness to something quite different from hatred and strife. Nutrition and reproduction are the two main activities of all living things, the one concerned with self-assertion and the other with self-sacrifice. If the object of one is to secure life of the individual, the object of other is to secure life of the species through self-abandonment. In the light of this it is not too much to assert that life is not only an abode of the strong, as the evolutionists would like us to believe, but a home of the loving too. Love may be condemned as a delusion; but it is so only in so far as the whole life is a delusion. Once the fact of life is accepted it is unphilosophising to refuse to accept the fact of Love.

The highest and most satisfying faith of Rumi clusters round his simple confession that 'God is Love'. God, being a God of Love, not only creates all things in Love but also sustains all things in Love and brings them to perfection in Love. The pure Love which glows and

burns the human soul is a fire kindled and cherished by God Himself. It is the genius of Love to sacrifice, a quality that has its source in God's eternal self-giving. All human love is purified by the touch of God and smitten with a new ardour by the genius of God because all human love is identical with God's own uncreated flame of Love.

Love is a complex psychical experience. It is a 'sentiment' or 'passion', the term 'passion' being understood as a deep and steadfast enthusiasm rather than an explosive emotional outburst. Both sentiment and passion stand for stable and complex organisations of the emotional life. But while sentiment implies a higher intellectual development and a greater refinement and subtlety of emotional feeling, passion has forcefulness as its characteristic feature. Love is different from any mere passionate emotion. It is a system of organised emotions and desires, which, due to its systematic character and its principle of unification, is stable, regulative and inclusive.

Rūmī maintains that it is not possible to give an exact description of Love either in psychological or in philosophical ways because the innermost experiences of an individual cannot be defined. Love is an experience. It is a personal experience and not a theory and for this



reason defies all analysis and escapes all criticism. A mystery of life itself, it is its own evidence and can only be lived. Love is indefinable, indescribable and ineffable. To use Rūmi's own words :

"Whatsoever I say in exposition and explanation of Love, when I come to Love itself I am ashamed of that explanation."¹

II. Nevertheless, Rūmi does present a philosophy of Love. A part of his arguments can be traced back to Plato who, with his conception of a supersensuous Reality, has exerted an enormous influence on all mysticism.

Love is the cosmic Principle, the origin of all life and the end of all life. It is not merely an individual sentiment, but the very essence of life, the source of it and the goal of it. This essential Principle underlies all existence and controls all existence, so that everything in the universe works for its own fulfilment. Through it alone the soul's longing to be reunited with the Eternal Beloved is realised, there being no force more powerful than Love, no bond stronger than Love, that would fructify the union of the human and the Divine. One who

1. The Mathnawi. Vol. I, 112.

بر چه گویم عشق را شرح و بیان :: چون بعشق آیم حجل باشم از آن

is endowed with this cosmic feeling has the Perfect Beauty as his sole object, for Love is nothing but a movement towards Perfect Beauty. The intenser the Love the deeper is man's penetration into the Divine secrets. Everything gains worth in proportion to its realisation of this Perfect Beauty. Love is the inherent desire of everything for immortality and it is the sole principle through which this desire is realised.

The Greeks were the upholders of this view. Hesiod, for instance, taught that Earth and Love were the first things to spring from the chaos. Earth was the dead matter on which worked the informing principle, Love. In his Phaedrus, Plato talks of Eros as belonging to the oldest gods. He postulates that Love is a movement towards Perfect Beauty, which he identifies with the Highest Idea. The soul strives to rise from matter to this Perfect Beauty in order to perceive it in its pure form. Love is a craving after immortality through pro-creation or through intellectual or artistic productions. It is, thus, a mediator between the two worlds, the sensible and the Ideal. "Marvel not then", said Socrates, "at the love which all men have of their offspring; for that universal love and interest is for the sake of immortality." ² and

2. Plato: Symposium; 208 tr. by Jowett.

what is Love? "He is a great spirit and like all that is spiritual he is intermediate between the divine and the mortal." ³

In the words of Rumi:

"Had it not been for pure Love's sake how should God have bestowed an existence on the heavens? He has raised up the lofty celestial sphere that thou mayst apprehend the sublimity of Love." ⁴

Being the Principle of unification and assimilation, Love is the force of attraction in every atom, a force that impels one form of life to lose itself in another form of life. It is this process that results in growth. Love is a paradox, wherein by giving one takes and by dying one lives. Inorganic matter becomes organic by dying to itself and by thereby raising itself to the higher life of plant. Plant is exalted higher still into the life of animal by the same process of dying to one's own life. This principle of dying to live pervades the whole course of evolution and it holds good not only in the evolution of man from matter, but also in the further evolution of man to the all-embracing spiritual whole — God.

3. Ibid, 202.

4. The Mathnawi. Vol.V, 2739-40

گر نبودی بهر عشق پاک را : کجای وجودی دادی و ندادی را
من بزرگ افراشتم چرخ هستی : تا علقه عشق را نهی کنی



"If there had not been Love, how should there have been existence ? How should bread have attached itself to you? The bread became you through your love and appetite." ⁵

"Love makes the dead bread into spirit; it makes the spirit that was perishable everlasting." ⁶

The highest principle of explanation for Iqbal is the principle of growth and development through the power of assimilation. He repeatedly speaks of this power of transformation pervading the universe, even though he admits that he cannot explain this phenomenon in terms of spatial contact and causation. One might try to explain it, he observes, by the principle of identity of cause and effect. But what we find in Reality is qualitative transformation which points to the incommensurability of the cause and the effect — fuel turning into fire and bread turning into life and consciousness.

"How would an organic thing disappear by change into a plant? How would vegetative things sacrifice themselves to become endowed with spirit?" ⁷

5. Ibid. Vol.V; 2012-13.

6. Ibid. Vol.V; 2014.

عشق نان مرده را می جان کند: جان که نانی بود جاودان کند

7. Ibid. Vol.V; 3855.

کے جادی محو گشتی در نبات: کہ فدا کی روح گشتی نباتات



Why is this relation inexplicable? This relation is inexplicable because Love is inexplicable. The nature of God and the nature of soul are ultra-rational, and so must be their deepest and ultimate relation:

"There is a union beyond description or analogy between the Lord of Man and the spirit of man." 8

This point has been emphasised by many philosophers from ancient times. Anaximander developed a remarkably similar theory about the origin and evolution of living beings. He believed that in the beginning the earth was fluid. This fluid evaporated, and from its heat and moisture living beings were produced. At first there were beings of a low grade, which, by adapting themselves to their environment, gradually evolved into higher organisms. Parmenides believed that heat and cold, or light and darkness, are the two forces that hold the world together. The more hot a thing is the more real it is, and conversely, the more cold it is the more unreal it is. Heraclitus expressed the same view when he said that the universe is a harmony of opposites. Everything necessarily contains in itself the two opposite principles. and

8. Ibid. Vol.IV, 760.

اتصال بی تکلف بی قیاس : دست رب الناس را با جان ناس



in their struggle consists its life and existence. With out this conflict everything would cease to exist. Even Democritus, the atomist, said that Love and Hate are the two forces that brought about the movement of the atoms. The universe is held together by the force of love, and it is disintegrated by the force of hate.⁹ Similarly, in Indian thought the Upaniṣads talked of Anna being turned into Prāṇa.

Haeckel gives a similar conception when he says "The irresistible passion that draws Edward to the sympathetic Ottilia or Paris to Helen and leaps over all bounds of reason and morality, is the same powerful 'unconscious' attractive force which impels the living spermatozoon to force an entrance into the ovum in the fertilisation of the egg of the animal or plant — the same impetuous movement which unites two atoms of hydrogen to one atom of oxygen for the formation of a molecule of water."¹⁰

Thus for Rūmi it is the function of assimilation and growth that explains life, and not any system of

9. Stace (W.T.): A Critical History of Greek Philosophy; pp.27-91.

10. As quoted by Perry (R.B.): Present Philosophical Tendencies; p.73.



metaphysics. Love is the impelling force behind this process. But this Love is fundamentally different from the Eros of Plato. That, being a means to the realisation of theoretical Truth, is nothing more than gazing at the impersonal intellectual Beauty, hence more akin to Spinoza's intellectual love of God than to the Love of Rūmī. The central conception of Rūmī's thought is Life, and his Love makes man a partaker of Infinite Life, a living organ in the One Unitary Life.

"Oh, happy is the man who was freed from himself and united with the existence of a living one." 11

Love is the essential substance of man and not an accidental attributes. It is the divine spark in man, his true self, which cannot die. From this spark man catches the scent of the Eternal Beloved. All men are endowed with greater or less capacity for loving the Divine Beloved, for man cannot escape the shafts of Divine Love, escape the snare that is eternally fascinating. Gamble your life for Love, says Rūmī, if you are a brave

11. The Mathnawi. Vol.I, 1535.

اے ملک آت مرد کز خود رسته شد : در وجود زندہ پیوستہ شد

soul, as it is the weak soul that dare not make such a venture, and it is undoubtedly inferior to man.

"This is characteristic of Man alone: to the other animals love is wanting, and that want of love arises from their inferiority to Man." 12

Love is righteousness. It is the yearning for the Good and for the contemplation of the Beautiful. It is the desire to assimilate and absorb the Highest, the desire that results in the creation of values and ideals and in the endeavour to realise them. The fault lies in man himself that he is prone to sin. Lust is not Love. In the words of Rumi, Love is Gods' messenger, chaste and pure, and ever hidden from the faithless hearts. It is the Fountain of Immortality, the Life Eternal that renews the life of death, this Fount of Immortal Life being nothing but the sprinkling of the Divine Grace itself.

"If life be gone, fresh life to you
God offereth,
A life eternal, to renew
This life of death
The fount of Immortality
In Love is found;

12. Ibid. Vol.1, 2432.

ای چنین نامینی در ادبیت : هر صیوان را کست از کست



Then come, and in this boundless sea
Of Love be drowned." 13

Plato agrees with Rūmī when he describes love as the love of the everlasting possession of the good. As Socrates says in the Symposium, "wisdom is a most beautiful thing, and love is of the beautiful; and therefore, love is also a philosopher or lover of wisdom. 14

Love is a divine gift. As such, it cannot be acquired nor can it be repelled as one wishes. A boor of its own kind, it overtakes man at the touch of God's Eternal Bounty in such a manner that the lover neither knows it nor hopes for it. As a sudden revelation it dawns upon him and overwhelms him, makes Mount Sinai drunken and makes Moses fall into a swoon, as Rūmī puts it.

Consequently, the soul deprived of Love is a desolate soul. It is dead and static, as it has no power to move, much less the spiritual yearning that is so essential for its upward journey and its ultimate union with the Divine Beloved. Rūmī would say it is a soul spurred by God. The true seeker, therefore, prays ceaselessly to

13. Arberry (A.J.): The Rubaiyat of Jalāl-al-Dīn Rūmī
p.101.

14. Plato: Symposium, 204. tr. by Jowett.



God never to destitute him of Love, his only ray of hope in the thorny path of self-realisation.

"When Love hath no care for him, he is left as a bird without wings. Alas for him then ! " 15

Although a God-sent grace, man's efforts in the form of prayer and aspiration are essential to gain Love. These efforts are destined to bear fruits, for he who sows alone shall reap. The seeker is bound to be the finder.

"Do service to God, that per chance thou mayst become a lover: devotional service is a means of gaining Love: it comes into action (produces an effect). " 16

Love is a means of self-purification and consequently a means of man's ascent to the Divine. It is the only true basis on which all moral perfection and spiritual knowledge depends. The bliss of union cannot be experienced until the bodily nature is entirely spiritualised and Love alone, that bespeaks utter self-

15. The Mathnavi; Vol. I, 31.

چون نباشد عشق را پروای او : او چو مرغی ماند بی پروای او

16. Ibid. Vol. V, 2728.

بندی کن تا شوی عاشق لعل : بزرگ کسبت آید در عمل

renunciation, self-sacrifice, in fact a complete forsaking of everything, wealth, honour and life for the sake of the Beloved, can work to this end. It eradicates all the evil within man, destroys his passion and rends the veils of egoism, of reason and of shame and fear. All the subtleties of book-learning and dialectics are spurned by the soul, so that the lover dwells with his Love alone.

"When in my breast
Thy flame of Love was lit,
that'er but Love my heart possess
Love's fire consumed it
The subtle brain
The school, the book I spurned;
The poet's craft I strove to gain,
And rhyming verse I learned." 17

Love is the real purpose of all religion and the real essence of all religion. The external manifestations and dogmas of religion are not identical with it, because it transcends all external religious laws. Rumi maintains that every duty and every service as emphasised by the Qurān is nothing but a guise of Love.

17. Arberry (A.J.): The Rubaiyat of Jalal-al-din Rumi; p.38.

Consequently, one who experiences this sublime sentiment is truly religious. To him everything is lovable as to him there is nothing but God everywhere.

"Servitude and sovereignty are known: loverhood is concealed by these two veils: Verily, the circumambulation performed by him who beholds the King is above wrath and grace and infidelity and religion." 18

Ibn al-Arabi repeats these words of Rumi when he says that the religion of Love is the most sublime religion. It is the essence of every creed and every religion. "Our Plato and our Galen" as Rumi calls it, "the only remedy of all human ills, of body and of soul." One moment of it is better than a thousand years of service of God. "To feel at one with God", says Shibli, "for a moment is better than all men's acts of worship from the beginning to the end of the world." 19 And Rumi says:

18. The Mathnawi. Vol.III, 4724 and Vol.IV, 2967.

بندگی و سلطنت معلوم شد .: زین دو پرده عاشقی مکتوم شد
خود لوان آنک و شهبین بود .: فوق قمر و لطف و کنز و بین بود

19. As quoted by Nicholson in The Mystics of Islam; p.116.



"He alone whose garment is rent by a mighty love is purged of comeliness and all defect. Hail, O Love that bringest us good gain - thou that art the physician of all our ills." 20

Endowed with this Essence man can express his faith in any form, and yet be religious. If he speaks theology, says Rumi, it turns into a discourse on spiritual poverty; if he speaks infidelity, it becomes true religion and if he speaks of doubt, his doubt turns into certainty, for he is the Pure Source that throws away all impurity; he is the sea of sincerity, whose falsehood adorns even the Truth.

"Whatever the man in love with God speaks, the scent of Love is springing from his mouth into the abode of Love." 21

Love is different from the psycho-physical feeling of pleasure and pain. Transcending all human sorrow and joy, all human fancy and imagination, it constitutes

20. The Mathnavi. Vol.I, 22-23.

بر کرا جامه ز عشق پاک شد : از مرض و جلد عیب پاک شد
 نسا و باش ای عشق نوش سودای ما : لب لبب جلد علمتای ما

21. Ibid. Vol.I, 2860.

هر چه گوید مرد عاشق بلوی عشق : از دمانش ی جلد در کوی عشق

a rare state of consciousness that is not identical with the psycho-physical states. It knows no end and it knows no decay. As such, its possessor is not bound by his bodily attributes; he soars higher, transcending all duality and all good and evil of existence.

"In the verdant garden of Love, which is without end, there are many fruits besides sorrow and joy."

"Our emotion is not caused by grief and joy, our consciousness is not related to fancy and imagination." 22

However, this form of affection does involve physical attraction as a necessary element in the development of the sentiment of Love, because although in its worst the physical attraction leads to lust, in its best it carries man beyond the bondage of the senses.

Love is more than any mere synthesis of joy and sorrow with their respective impulses. And yet, it finds its expression in joy, joy that is characteristically spontaneous, expansive and vital. Joy is an active

22. Ibid. Vol.I, 1793 and 1803.

باغ سبز عشق کوی منتهاست :: جز غم و شادی در دین میو است
از غم و شادی باشد جوش ما :: با خیال و وهم نبود هوش ما

disinterestedness, its instinctive impulse being not only to maintain its object but to surrender itself to it and to abide in it. It is the joy in the object for its own sake, a valuation of the object for its own sake, so that when one experiences joy in beauty one simply trusts to the inspiration of beauty. This joy of presence is followed by the sorrow of absence because Love includes both joy and sorrow as interpenetrative emotions.

Pure Love is disinterested and the lover has no selfish purpose to serve through it. God is not worshipped with the hopes of attaining heaven, or from fears of hell. God is worshipped because the lover wants God Himself and because he is aware that he himself is a particle of God. As Rābiā remarks : "My absolute and uninterrupted love for God alone leaves no room for love or hatred for anyone else." Likewise Dhu'l-Nun cries in the spirit of Rābiā, "Fear of being parted from the Beloved is the worst of all fears. Fear of fire in comparison with fear of being parted from the Beloved is like a drop of water cast into the mightiest ocean."²³ It is this boundless love, this implicit faith, that

23. Nicholson (E.A.): The Mystics of Islam; p.126.

creates in the lover the keen yearning and the inflexible resolution to attain a permanent union with God.

Love is the rapture of the lover whose Beloved is God. It is the wine of inspiration that is so essential for the union of the two. The consumption of this wine is followed by the state of *Hāl* or ecstasy wherein the glory of God is revealed to the intoxicated soul.

"Especially consider the effect of this spiritual wine which is from the jar of *Balā* — not the wine whereof the intoxication lasts only one night." ²⁴

Thus enraptured the lover sees God in all creatures and pours forth his universal love in words and deeds. Beholding the Divine Beauty in all souls, and by submitting himself completely to his love, the lover ascends to the love and knowledge of the Highest Beauty. "Man's love of God", says *Hujwiri* "is a quality which manifests itself in the heart of the pious believer in the form of veneration and magnification." ²⁵

Love is incommunicable. It is incommunicable because it has no necessary connection with the external

24. The Mathnawi. Vol. IV, 2097.

ناله این باره که از هم بلیست : نهی که مستی او یکیشیت

25. *Nicholson (R.A.): The Mystics of Islam; p.110.*

world and all that belongs to it. It is quite different from science and art which can be learnt through words and practice. Love is the Essence and Reality that does not belong to the phenomenal world although it is the very principle that harmonises and unites the lover and the beloved in the phenomenal world. It is something that can be awakened by personal touch alone.

Love cannot take form because God cannot take form. It is the artificer of form, without which nothing can be compacted and nothing can be realised. Nevertheless, it is itself in need of form just as the painter and picture are in need of each other. As Rumi puts it, "it is like the moving of the finger with the moving of the ring." 26

Love remains hidden; only its effects are manifest. If at all there is any medium through which it can be expressed it is music. Love, in fact, descends to the phenomenal realm in the garb of music — music which is as paradoxical as Love itself. Love is paradoxical, "Poison and antidote at the same time" as Rumi calls it. So too is music that is its instrument, as the sweetest songs are those that carry the saddest

26. Arberry (A.J.): Discourses of Rumi; p. 148.

thoughts. Music charms our soul because it derives its melody from Love. Music is the food of Love, which fills the soul with joy and peace. As Dhu'l Nun observes : "Music is a divine influence which stirs the heart to seek God: those who listen to it spiritually attain unto God and those who listen to it sensually fall into unbelief." ²⁷ And Rūmī says: "Whoever saw a poison and antidote like the reed? Whoever saw a sympathiser and a longing lover like the reed?" ²⁸

But the mysteries of Divine Love cannot be communicated to everyone vulgar. It is a secret to be jealously guarded from their eyes, as everyone hears what is suitable to his understanding; and how can the unripe understand the state of the ripe? As Rūmī puts it: "Only to the senseless is this sense confided: the tongue hath no customer save the ear." ²⁹

Love is the loss of self-hood. God is the real self of man and there can be no communion with Him so long as the dark phenomenal self persists. Like the

27. Nicholson (R.A.): The Mystics of Islam; p.65.

28. The Mathnavi. Vol.I, 12.

همچوئی بری و تریاتی که دید: همچوئی دمساز و مشتاقی که دید

29. Ibid. Vol.I, 14.

معموم این مدوش جزیه مدوش نیست: مرزبان را مشتری جزگوش نیست



blind stone that resists the Sun and refuses to be turned into pure ruby the phenomenal self repels the influence of the Divine. The illusion of self-existence, the thorn-eating existence, as Rumi calls it, is a veil that abstracts the vision of the Unseen. This veil can be torn asunder only through the harmonising and unifying spirit of Love. Love is the renunciation of all self-will, a renunciation that bestows upon the soul its true freedom and raises it far above the myriad of Time by fostering its emergence in a timeless being.

"To remain in the state of stoniness and then to say 'I' is absurd: 'tis time for thee to become lowly and naughted, dead to self." 30

In death, therefore, consists the life of the lover. Love is his idol and God Himself is his witness. As Rumi says, with a falcon's pace and a tiger's pride he treads the path of death to the abode of his beloved, ever splendid and ever magnificent in his chase.

"If it be the road
The lover travelleth.

30. Ibid. Vol.V, 1946.

در مقام سنگی آنک می آید: وقت میکن کشتن تست و فنا

Endeth at one abode:

Naughting, and death;" 31

And, with Rūmī, Jāmi says:

"What though a hundred arts to thee be known:

Freedom from self is gained through love alone." 32

The lover seeks the Beloved, but when the Beloved arrives he becomes naught. He becomes dead to himself and he becomes dead to the world. Living in the Beloved he sees nothing but the Beloved. He is the eternal slave of the Beloved whose vision is the only robe of honour he seeks. In his servitude he has attained to perfect freedom because he knows that he who cannot be a slave cannot be free.

In him there is no desire of his own because his desire is the Beloved's desire and his pleasure is the Beloved's pleasure whether he be enjoying the bliss of union or suffering the torments of separation. He has no knowledge of his own, no thought of his own and no power of his own, and yet he is all-knowing and all-powerful through the power of his Beloved. The lover is naught in God, says Rūmī, like vinegar in the sea of

31. Arberry (A.J.): The Rubaiyat of Jalāl-al-Dīn Rūmī, p.24

32. Jāmi: Yusuf and Zulaikha, tr. by Ralph T.H. Griffith, p.24.

honey, like a drop in ocean, so that he is everywhere and nowhere, so that his self-love is his love for the Beloved and his love for the Beloved is his own self-love. To see him is to see God and to love him is to love God, as he is the mountain that echoes the cry of the Beloved, as he is the image of the Beloved painted by the Beloved Himself.

"Oh, the life of lovers consists in death: thou wilt not win the Beloved's heart except in losing thine own. Of my existence there is nothing left in me but the name; in my being there is naught but thee, O thou whose wishes are gratified." 33

True love, thus, is that which empties one's self of everything except God. It is the shedding of one's own attributes and being clothed with the Divine attributes. As Jūnāyḍ defines it, love is "the substitution of the qualities of the Beloved for the qualities of the lover. In other words, love signifies the passing away of the individual self - it is an uncontrollable

33. The Mathnawī. Vol.I, 1751; Vol.V, 2023.

ایہ حیات عاشقان در مرگ : دل نیامی جز کہ در دل بزرگی
 برین از صفتی من جز نام نیست : در وجودم جز تو ای خوش کام نیست





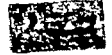
rapture, a God-sent grace which must be sought by ardent prayer and aspiration." 34

What is Love? asks Rūmī. It is, he says, the sea of not-being, wherein the intellect is shattered to pieces. It carries with itself the conviction that comes from immediate intuition, the certainty of which cannot be shaken. Hence all faith that depends on intellectual proofs and dialectics, on forms and ceremonies, and all worship that is inspired with the desire to gain everlasting happiness, are futile. "O God" says Rābiā in the spirit of a true lover, "If I worship Thee in fear of Hell, burn me in Hell; and if I worship Thee in hope of paradise, exclude me from Paradise; but if I worship Thee for Thine own sake, withhold not Thine everlasting beauty " 35 Rūmī echoes these words of Rābiā when he says: I turn towards the qibla because of my love for Thee; otherwise I am tired of both the prayer and qibla. If the whole universe is offered to me I would still prefer the never-ceasing bounty of this hidden treasure.

With this selflessness and with this humility the ardent lover undertakes his pilgrimage so much so

34. Nicholson (R.A.): The Mystics of Islam; p.112.

35. Ibid. p.115.



that he is not even conscious of himself as loving. he has emptied himself of all otherness and is enraptured in contemplation of the Beloved. Being occupied with one's own love and one's own seeking is a sin, because such a love and such a seeking are sin. The lovers of God, says Bayāzid, are separated from God by their love. True love is that wine in which the alloy of man's self is purified, transmuted and spiritualised.

"Prize not all life that has passed without love;
Love is the water of Life: receive it in thy
heart and soul." 36

Love is divine. The distinction between spiritual Love and the so called material Love should be set aside, because the real object of Love, whether it be love of the things of the phenomenal world or of the world beyond, is not the outward form. If its object were mere form, then the lover would not have abandoned it as soon as the spirit departs from it. He would have continued to love it because the sensible form is perceived in the same way by the senses and so the mere fact of the spirit's leaving the body would make no

36. Nicholson (R.A.): Selected Poems from the Divan-i-Shams-i-Tabriz; p.215.

عمر کی عشق رفت صبح حاشی بگیر : آب حیات است عشق در دل جانش پذیر

difference to him. Again, if the form were the true source of attraction, then all those who have senses would have been attracted by that particular form in the same way. But that is not the case. The lover ceases to love the form as soon as life goes out of it; and the reason must be that the real object of his love was something other than the outward form itself.

" That which is the object of love is not the form, whether it be love for the things of this world or yonder world. That which you have come to love for its form — why have you abandoned it after the spirit has fled." 37

The phenomenal form cannot be the object of Love at all. Love is never unfaithful to its object, as it never changes its constancy. Its object is always the same and it is God. Man can love nothing but God. The thing he loves is the thing on which the Divine radiance has fallen. It is a proof of the Sun to which man ultimately turns his gaze. To God alone belongs perfect and Eternal Beauty. All things beautiful in the world

37. The Mathnavi. Vol.II, 703-74.

آنچ معشوقست صورت نیست آن. : خواه عشق این جهان خواه آن جهان
 آنچ بر صورت تو عاشق گشته. : چون برون شد جان پراش گشته

of phenomena are only a passing reflection of this Eternal Beauty, to which they are related as sun-light is related to the Sun. The phenomenal beauty is like the illumination of a wall by the Sun. Hence the love of the worldly man who perceives nothing but the form, as well as the love of the Perfect Man who loves Reality, regarding the outward form as a mirror reflecting this Reality, is the love of God who is the only true object of all love. In other words, all love is spiritual and the real object of all love is spiritual. Human love too is essentially a spiritual passion, for, as Rumi puts it, it is gilded by the gold from that mine. Plato expresses the same view, although differently, when he says that the beautiful alone deserves our love. It is this conception that leads him to conclude that man's love is always the love of the Beautiful — a conclusion quite similar to that of Rumi who says:

" That friendship was a radiance cast upon their wall: that sign of the Sun went back towards the Sun. On whatsoever thing that radiance may fall thou becomest in love with that thing, O brave man." 38

38. Ibid. Vol.III, 552-53.

آن سعای بود بر دیوارشان : جانب خورشید در رفتن آن نشان
بر هر آن چیزی که افتد آن شعاع : تو بر آن هم عاشق آن به شجاع

Consequently, Love is an ascending step towards the knowledge of God, whether its object be divine or phenomenal. The phenomenal beauty paves the way to the noumenal origin of all Beauty, and all eyes are turned towards this one Eternal Light, as soon as all the reflections fade away. One cannot attain to Reality by pursuing its shadow, yet every shadow is the bridge to Reality. Every fancy of yours, says Rūmi, is the go-between towards your union with the Eternal Beauty. The name is not the Named, and yet it is identical with the Named, in so far as it leads to the Named and objectifies it.

"Whether Love be from this earthly side
or from that heavenly side, in the end it
leads us yonder." 39

Jāmi echoes Rūmi's words when he says:

"Even from earthly love thy face avert not,
Since to the Real it may serve to raise thee." 40

"To worldly love thy youthful thoughts incline
For earthly love will lead to love divine

39. The Mathnawi. Vol.I, 111.

عاشق گزین سرگزین سرت : عاقبت ما را بدان سرا صبرست

40. Nicholson (R.A.): The Mystics of Islam; p.116.

First with the Alphabet thy task begin

Then take the Word of God and read therein." ⁴¹

Plato gives degrees of Love: Interested Love that corresponds to the conventionalities; Disinterested or Mad Love, which has sense-object as its object and Disinterested Love towards the Unseen. ⁴² "And the true order of going or being led by another to the things of love," said Socrates, "is to begin from the beauties of earth and which mount upwards for the sake of that other beauty" ⁴³ because Love is satisfied in the Perfect Beauty alone. It begins with the beauty of earthly things, proceeds by regular steps, reaching at last a beauty in which all existence is seen as harmonious and one. And the true lover beholds the ideal beauty in all things — the ideal good, which is regarded not only with the eye of knowledge but of faith and desire too ! He is thus the spectator of all time and all existence.

Ghazzālī talks of different types of love: Self-love, which involves man's desire for his own safety and

41. Jāmi: Yusuf and Zulaikha, tr. by Ralph, T.H. Griffith; p.24.

42. Plato: Phaedrus; 265.

43. Plato: Symposium; 211. tr. by Jowett (B.).

preservation; Love for the sake of the benefit derived from the thing loved; Love of a thing for its own sake. This, he says, is the real Love, and it endures as the Love of Beauty and Goodness. Then there is Love that is inspired by Goodness and Beauty in the moral sense, wherein the moral goodness and beauty of character are loved; and Love that springs from the secret affinity existing between the lover and the Beloved. One loves a person not for beauty or pleasure but simply because of the kinship of spirits.

One who has combined in himself all these causes of love and one in whom the attributes which are loved have reached their perfection, has reached the highest degree of Love. In God alone all these causes are combined and all things lovable found in their highest perfection. ⁴⁴

Furthermore, the Love of the love for the earthly beauty is God's own Love for Himself as God is both Absolute Love and Absolute Beauty. He loves Himself and He knows Himself for, as Rūmī puts it None but God contemplates the Beauty of God.

44. Smith (Margaret): Al Ghazālī, the Mystic; pp.175-76.

Rūmī regards woman in her essential nature as the Eternal Beauty because she is the medium through which the Uncreated Divine Beauty manifests itself and exercises its creative activity. Viewed as an earthly beauty, she is the highest type of earthly beauty and viewed apart from the veil of form she is the revelation of the Divine Glory itself. She creates love in man, and thereby makes him seek the true Beloved.

Ībn 'l-Arabi declares that the most perfect vision of God can be enjoyed only in woman, who alone combines in herself both the aspects of creation simultaneously—that of agents, fa'iliyyah and that of patients, mufa'iliyyah —. What is essential here, as Rūmī observes is the mystical perception for seeing the Divine Beauty in her, for seeing the One Reality through the veil of her appearance.

"She (woman) is a ray of God, she is not that earthly beloved: she is creative, you might say she is not created. " 45

And so, she has her sway over the good and wise. Man's domination over her is a false domination, for in

45. The Mathnawi. Vol.I, 2437.

بر تو هست آن معشوق نیست :: عالتست آن لوبیا مخلوق نیست

reality he is always her captive. Water extinguishes fire but is it not fire that annihilates the water in the kettle and converts it into air? Man is enslaved to woman and it is the good man that is enslaved to her. Consequently, he who governs her is the ignorant man, as in him animality predominates over the human nature. He lacks all tenderness, kindness and affection, the essential human qualities; and he ceases to be a man, and Love is the characteristic of man alone.

"The Prophet said that woman prevails exceedingly over the wise and intelligent. While, on the other hand, ignorant men prevail over woman, for in them the fierceness of the animal is imprisoned." 46

Love of God originates in God. Love is the essence of God. Therefore the basis of all Love is God. God is Absolute Beauty and Absolute Love. He is, therefore, both the Lover and the Beloved. Man's love for God is the reflection of God's own Love, for God alone inspires it in his soul. He loves those who love Him

46. Ibid. Vol.I, 2433-34.

گفت پیغمبر که زن بر عاقلان : غالب آید سخت و بر صاحب دلائل
باز برون جا ملان غالب شوند : کاندرا ایشان تندی میروست به



and when He loves them He leaves nothing of themselves in them. His lovers are His beloveds, who are one with Him. Divine Love brought man into existence, bestowed upon him spiritual perception and created in him the yearning for the Divine Beloved. It is this Love that made Mount Sinai drunken and it is this Love that made Moses fall in a swoon. Consequently, if there is any lover and any beloved in the world it is God Himself.

"When love for God has been doubled in thy heart, without any doubt God hath love for thee. That exaltedness too hath desire and love towards the soul: from this fact understand (the meaning of) He loves them and they love Him." 47

In other words, the attraction between the lover and the beloved is a mutual attraction. Love seeks and desires Beauty; so also Beauty seeks and desires Love. As a matter of fact, Love seeks Beauty because Beauty seeks Love, and Beauty seeks Love, because Love seeks Beauty. Man needs God, says Ibn'l-Arabi, but no less does God need man. The lover aspires to union with the

47. Ibid. Vol.III, 4396 and 4440.

در دل تو مهر حق چون شد دولتو: هست حق را بیگمانی هر تو
بیل و عشق آن شرف هم سوی بان: زین محبت و مجودت را بدان

Beloved, says Rūmī, because there is love in the heart of the Beloved Himself. Hence the Beloved never fails to respond to the call of the lover. The thirsty souls seek the Water of Life because the Water of Life has exerted its attraction on them. In the words of Rūmī, all kings are the slaves of their slaves. Everyone dies for those who die for him. The fowler is a prey to the birds, because the birds are the prey to the fowler. The thirsty man is a victim of water, because water is the victim of the thirsty man. In other words, every lover is a beloved and every beloved is a lover.

"Whomsoever thou didst deem to be a lover, regard him as the loved one, for relatively he is both this and that. This thirst in our souls is the attraction exerted by the water: We are its, and it is ours." ⁴⁸

Consequently, Lover and Beloved are mere names for different aspects of one and the same Essence, Love. Lover and Beloved are identical, as Love cannot be predicated of any being except God. Both are the rays of the same sun. God is all; the lover is merely a veil with the illusion of self-existence.

48. Ibid. Vol.I, 1740 and Vol.III, 4399.

هر که عاشق دید بیشعشوق دلان : کو نیست صفت هم این و هم آن
 جذب آبست این عطش در جان ما : ما از آن او و هم آن ما



"The Beloved is all and the lover but a veil; the Beloved is living and the lover a dead thing"

"For assuredly there is a window from heart to heart: they are not separate and far from each other like two bodies. The earthenware basins of two lamps are not joined, but their light is mingled in its passage."⁴⁹

Although the attraction between the lover and the Beloved is a mutual attraction it manifests itself in different ways, in the form of sovereignty in the Beloved and in the form of submissiveness and service in the lover. The lover is opposed to the Beloved as want is opposed to contentment. The Beloved wants nothing, and His love illumines His whole being. The lover's being is nothing but want and desire and his love consumes his soul. The lover is irreverent to the Beloved in so far as his claim of love involves equality with the Beloved.

49. Ibid. Vol.I, 30; Vol.III, 4391-92.

جمله معشوقست و عاشق پردهٔ : زنده معشوقست و عاشق مردهٔ
 که ز دل تا دل روزن بود : نه جدا و دور چون دود تن بود
 متصل نبود سفال و دیرباغ : نورشان ممزوج باشد در باغ

"But the desire of the lovers makes them lean,
while the desire of the loved ones makes them
fair and beauteous." 50

But there is no irreverence and no opposition present in so far as his inward aspect is concerned, for both he himself and his claim have become naught in the presence of the Beloved. Love harmonises them and unites them. Rūmī illustrates this point with the help of the following example. In the sentence 'Zayd died', he says, Zayd is the agent only in so far as he is the grammatical subject. But, in reality, he is not the agent, because he is non-existent. There is the real oneness of the lover and the Beloved; and this oneness is difficult to explain.

"Never for one instant do they cease from seeking;
never for one moment do they cease from pursuing
each other. In the lover's heart is naught but
the beloved: there is nothing to separate and
divide them." 51

50. Ibid. Vol.III, 4445.

یک میل عاشقان را فرزند : میل معشوق خوش و خوش فرزند

51. Ibid. Vol.VI, 2677 and 2680.

نشان از جست و جویک لعل نیست : از پی همشان یکدم نیست
در دل عاشق بزم معشوق نیست : در میان شان ناز و فراق نیست



Love is the fruit of knowledge and knowledge is the fruit of Love. Love is concomitant of gnosis and the true lover is the true gnostic. In other words, Love and Knowledge are inseparable, both being co-equal aspects of the same reality.

Love is the root of all thinking because it inspires in man the tendency to abandon himself to his object and to identify himself with it. It has the power of facilitating concentration and whole-hearted interest as also the determination to cleave to the problem through thick and thin. Love's reason is born of sympathetic insight and it is, for this reason, the best reason. In this Republic Plato connects the philosophical element in man with that which makes him fond of what he understands, and in turn makes him understand what he is fond of. In one word Love and Knowledge are correlative terms and are implied in all human endeavours at speculation.

Consequently, he who is deficient in Love is deficient in knowledge, and he who is deficient in knowledge, is deficient in Love. Such a frail mind is the sole cause of all doubt and disbelief in the erring souls which attach themselves to phenomenal objects that

receive their transient life from God. To use Rumi's words, they consider lightening to be the Sun, as they are screened from the fancy of the Sun by their own false imagination of the Sun. He therefore regards it the duty of man to work for the perfection of his own mind. The Prophet said, if you are deficient in body you are the object of God's mercy. But, if you are deficient in mind, you become the cause of His curse, for, perfecting the body is not in your power, while perfecting your mind is not beyond your power.

"This love, moreover, is the result of knowledge: whoever sat in foolishness on such a throne? On what occasion did deficient knowledge give birth to this love? Deficient knowledge gives birth to love, but only love for that which is really lifeless." 52

Love is not unreasonable belief. Unreasonable belief is different from Love. Love is beyond reason; and that which is beyond reason cannot be unreasonable. Believing without proof something that is capable of proof is unreasonable. But believing something that is

52. Ibid. Vol.II; 1532-33.

این محبت هم نتیجه دانش است. یکی که زرافه بر چرخ نمی نشیند
دانش ناقص که باین عشق زاده. عشق زاید مافوق اما بر حجاب

beyond all proof is a matter of experience. In other words, Love enters where the matter is incapable of proof, its only proof being the testimony of personal experience.

Rūmī here deals with the contrast between Love and Reason, the two factors inherent in the personality of man. This conflict is described by him as the conflict between Shara wa Īshq, Law and Love, or as the conflict between Sharī-at wa Haqīqat, Law and Reality. Rūmī asserts the supremacy of Love over Law and Reason.

Love is opposed to Reason which is, by its very nature, dualistic. Reason cannot overcome the dualism of subject and object, and, for that reason, fails to grasp the essential unity of being. Life, owing to its immediacy, can only be felt and lived. Being supra-rational, it can neither be described nor explained, but can only be known through immediate intuition. Knowledge of Truth gained through reason is superficial, its analysis of life being nothing more than an examination of a dead and static thing. To use Rūmī's words, the intellect sees double that which is one; it splits into two that which is one, without binding it again. It is only a form of life, and being a form of life, how can it know the whole of life ?

It is Love alone that is the highest principle of unification and that apprehends reality in its wholeness. As against reason that differentiates and separates, Love binds and assimilates the heterogeneous and thereby makes it homogeneous with itself. In Socrates' second speech on Love in Phaedrus Plato maintains that Love is not utilitarian. Rūmi emphasises the same point when he says that the aql-i-Ma-āsh, the discursive reason, is utilitarian by nature, as it weighs profit and loss before advancing even a single step. Reason hesitates and stops. Love rushes headlong towards its goal tireless and dauntless of all difficulties and all impediments. Rūmi, therefore, calls Love the Madness, the Divine Madness, the all-consuming Madness, that melts everything that dares to obstruct the path of the lover. Without it his journey is difficult. It is impossible.

"How should Reason wend the way of despair ?

'Tis Love that runs on its head in that direction.
Love is reckless, not Reason: Reason seeks that
from which it may get some profit." 53

53. Ibid. Vol.VI, 1966-67.

قتل راهبان، امید کی رود : عشق باشد که آن لطف بر سر دود
راهبانی عشق باشد فی فرد : قتل آن جوید که آن سودی برد



Rūmi, therefore, disparages the discursive intellect, as 'child's intellect', as 'sick man's intellect', and as 'the fetter of mankind'. It is clever in word and deed, he says, but all its cleverness fails before the inner experience. The source of real knowledge is spiritual perception, whose origin lies in Love. As Gandhi observes, reason has its own place, but it must not usurp the heart. Reason is a corrective and it can perform its duty only if the heart is sound.⁵⁴ And Rūmi says:

"When the lover (of God) is fed from within himself with pure wine, there reason will remain lost and companionless. Partial discursive reason is a denier of Love, though it may give out that it is a confidant."⁵⁵

One is here reminded of Bradley's characterisation of reason as involving dualism and contradictions as well as Bergson's conception of it as inadequate instrument to know reality. Both maintain that reason cannot grasp the essence of reality, as it cuts reality

54. Gandhi (M.K.): The Supreme Power; p.34.

55. The Mathnavi. Vol.I, 1981-82.

ما شق از خود چون غذا یا بر صیق : عقل را نجاغم، همانند زنیق
عقل جزوی عشق را منکر بود : گریه بنیاید صاحب سر بود

and presents it piecemeal. Life is ultra-rational, says Gandhi, in its essence, and its underlying Reality is God. It can be realised not through discursive reason but by direct experience, and this is possible through Love. We must, therefore, "be satisfied with nothing less than personal experience." 56

Love is the source of intuition. It is the spiritual faculty in man, the Infinite Itself, that doubts the Finite and that questions the Finite. Love is illumination, that attains to Truth by transcending all contradictions and all relations, a kind of direct feeling about the unity of Being in the midst of plurality. It is the source of enlightenment.

In other words, Love is intuition of identity that absorbs all distinctions of fidelity and infidelity, good and evil, right and wrong. It is amoral and non-rational, in the sense that it is neither identical with law nor with morals nor with theoretical reason, nor with any other outward form. Its essence is a cosmic feeling, an intuition of oneness with the spirit of the universe. Rumi therefore observes:

56. Gandhi (M.K.): The Supreme Power; p.33.

"I have tried far-thinking (provident) intellect; henceforth I will make myself mad." 57

Tagore repeats these words of Rūmī when he says:

"I have wasted my days and nights in the company of steady wise neighbours. Much knowing has turned my hair grey, and much watching has made my sight dim I swear to surrender this moment all claims to the ranks of the ranks of the descent. I let go my pride of learning and judgement of right and wrong With the foam of the berry-red wine I will bathe and brighten my laughter." 58

Consequently, relying on any means other than Love in order to obtain union with the Divine Beloved leads only to separation. The sea of Reality casts away all the forms that are used as means of approach to it.

"Love makes the wine of realisation to bubble:
He is the cup-bearer to the siddiq (true lover)
in secret." 59

57. The Mathnavi. Vol.II, 2392.

از مردم عقل دور اندیشی را :: بعد ازین دیوانه سازم خویشی را

58. Tagore: The Gardener; p 42.

59. The Mathnavi. Vol.III, 4742.

عشق جو شهباده تحیتن را :: او بود ساقی بان صدیق را



This is the poetic picture of love as the source of inspiration and knowledge presented by Rūmi. Intuition transcends reason. It is primarily cognitive in nature although it does involve supra-mundane elements of satisfaction in enlightenment. The Buddha's enlightenment, for instance, was the supreme experience which he got suddenly through intuition. And in every case, as in the case of the Buddha, Love is the source of intuition and enlightenment.

"And being, O Priests, myself subject to birth", said the Buddha "I perceived the wretchedness of what is subject to birth, and craving the incomparable security of a Nirvāṇa free from birth; myself subject to old age ... disease, ... death, ... sorrow ... corruption. I perceived the wretchedness of what is subject to corruption, and craving the incomparable security of a Nirvāṇa free from corruption. I attained the incomparable security of a Nirvāṇa free from corruption. And the knowledge and insight sprang up within me." 60

Rūmi identifies Love with Adam and the discursive reason with Iblis, Satan. Love, he says, is the characteristic of Adam and the particular discursive

60. Warren (Henry Clarke): Buddhism in Translation; p. 338.

reason is the distinctive quality of Iblis. Adam, who is the symbol of humanity in its original essence, is divine. The knowledge given to him was of intuitional nature, quite different from intellectual knowledge and it was given to him through Love.

Iblis is the principle of evil. He could not appreciate the divine dignity of man, because the intellect, being materialistic, cannot realise the eternal value of man. This realisation can only be gained through Love alone, and Iblis had only knowledge and no Love. Hence for him Adam was nothing but a figure of clay. Being the master of esoteric knowledge he is like the host, who knows nothing more than the names, titles and descriptions of the quests in his own house. Rumi says, intelligence is like swimming in the sea, wherein the swimmer is not saved. Love is the ship that can offer refuge to the soul, sweeping away the seven seas like straw. He says:

"Sell intelligence and buy bewilderment;
intelligence is opinion, while bewilderment
is (immediate) vision. He that is blessed
and familiar (with spiritual mysteries) knows



that intelligence is of Iblis, while love is of Adam." 61

The discursive reason must be freed. It must be superseded by aql-i-ma'ād, the transcendental Reason or the spiritual Reason. In spite of the fact that it controls the knowledge gained through the senses, it is itself subject to fantasies and is ever entangled in perplexing speculations that are its own creations. From these chains it needs to be released, and this release is achieved only through the power of the spirit.

Rūmī compares the senses and the sensual thoughts to the weeds on the surface of water. It is the work of the intellect to sweep them aside, so that the clear water is made visible. The intellect can perform its job properly only when it is freed by the spirit, and unless it is freed the weeds increase on the surface of water. Thus freed it becomes aql-i-ma'ād, the Transcendental Reason, subdues the senses, and apprehends the things of the yonder world.

61. The Mathnavi. Vol.IV, 1407 and 1402.

زیرک بنزدش دیرانی بجز : زیرک نلست و میرانی نظر
داند او کو نیکیست و مجرم است : زیرک ز ابلیس عشق از دم است

"Sense perception is captive to the intellect,
O reader; know also that the intellect is captive
to the spirit. The spirit sets free the chained
hand of the intellect and brings its embarrassed
affairs into harmony." 62

This transcendental reason is akin to the Neo-Platonic Universal Reason, the first emanation from the One, Aql-i-Kūl, as Rūmī calls it, and is akin to Aristotle's conception of Pure Thought thinking of itself. Plato equates the Absolute with Universal thought and Aristotle likewise considers God as the thought of thought in so far as God is the absolute subject and object of His own thought. Hegel talks of the Absolute Spirit as the self-thinking Idea, as the knowledge of God, for him, is the perfect self-knowledge.

Aql-i-ra-ād, the Spiritual reason is not imagination. The spiritual reason is opposed to imagination, the counterfeit of reason that resembles reason, to use Rūmī's words. Reason is set against sensuality and

62. Ibid. Vol.III, 1824-25.

حسن اسیر عقل باشد ای فلان :: عقل اسیر روح باشد ضم بدان
دست بسته عقل را جان با کرد :: کاد صافی بسته را هم ساز کرد

imagination is attached to sensuality and to the discursive reason, from which it cannot be distinguished without a touchstone.

Imagination cannot apprehend the essential truth of things. The spiritual faculties are threatened with destruction by it, in so far as it tends to lead one to wild fancy. As Rūmī says, man can walk safely without imagining in the path half an ell wide; but he will stagger if he is made to walk on the top of a high wall, even if the path is two ells wide. What causes him to tremble is his own force of imagination. Such a force cannot be akin to the spiritual reason.

"Reason is the contrary of sensuality: O brave man, do not call by the name of Reason that which is attached to sensuality."

"That which is a beggar of sensuality — call it imagination: imagination is the counterfeit of the sterling gold of the rational faculties." ⁶³

63. Ibid. Vol.IV, 2301-2302.

مقل ضد شہوت است ای پهلوان :: آنکے شہوت سے تندر عقلش بخوان
وہم خزانہ اش آنکے شہوت را گدازست :: وہم قلبہ فخر عقلہ است

The spiritual reason is not opinion either. Opinion is midway between ignorance and knowledge, the one winged bird, as Rūmi calls it, that flies and falls and flies again in the hope of reaching the nest. False opinion distorts perception of truth, just as a hair of the eye-brow across the eye distorts the sight. And when man's whole nature is perverted his spiritual vision is impeded and distorted too.

In other words, opinion is defective and for that reason it cannot be attached to the spiritual reason. It is attached to the discursive reason, and unless man is delivered from it, knowledge cannot dawn upon him. In the words of Rūmi, knowledge is the two-winged bird that flies to its destination on the wings of certainty. The possessor of the spiritual reason alone is the possessor of knowledge. One devoid of this reason is spiritually blind, and is absolutely involved in error.

"Imagination and opinion are the bane of the particular (discursive) reason, because its dwelling place is in the darkness." ⁶⁴

64. Ibid. Vol.III, 1558.

عقل جزوی آفتش و هم است ذهن :: زانک در غلات شد او را وطن

A similar conception is given by Socrates and Plato. Socrates gives three stages in the movement of thought and maintains that conventional belief is not knowledge. It is only in the third and final stage of thought, when the conventional belief becomes founded upon concepts,⁶⁵ customs, that it becomes knowledge. Plato asserts that opinion is not knowledge. Opinion is merely the instinctive belief based on faith. One may instinctively feel that something is true, but so long as this belief is not grounded on reason it cannot be called knowledge. Again, knowledge can only be true, unlike opinion which can be either true or false. ⁶⁵

The transcendental reason is the inner light of the Perfect Man. The transcendental reason is divine in nature and the Perfect Man is one with it. If he appears to be different from the Intelligence, it is to serve the divine purpose. Even angels became separated from it for the sake of God's wise purposes. The Perfect Man has affinity with the angels in so far as he too receives his portion from the Divine radiance. The angels pay homage to him, for was not Adam created in the image of God ?

65. Stace (W.T.): A Critical History of Greek Philosophy; pp.151-181.

The Perfect Man is the organ of Universal Reason. He is, therefore, the selfless traveller who goes by his own light, the follower of himself, as Rūmī calls him. The half intelligent man puts faith in him in order that he may be saved. It is the ignorant man who journeys in wilderness without a candle and without a guide because he neither possesses the perfect intelligence that would guide him aright nor does he possess the half intelligence that would enable him to follow the Perfect Man.

"Excellently well said the complaisant Prophet,
A mote of intelligence is better for thee than
fasting and performing the ritual prayer. The
Angel as well as the Intelligence is a finder of
God: each of the twain is a helper and worshipper
of Adam." 66

However, all this does not mean that the discursive reason must be suppressed or discarded. It only means that we must not fail to recognise something else in us, by whose power reason itself is sanctified and brought to perfection. The partial reason is the ray of

66. The Mathnavi. Vol.V, 454 and Vol.III, 3196.

پس نگذشت آن رسوله حوش جواز: در ره عقلت به ارمدم و عمار
هم ملک هم عقل حق را و ابدی: هر دو آدم را معین و ساجدی

the Universal Reason, which is the Light of God, the sea of Wisdom, whence emerge all waves of thought, and all phenomenal activities. It is sustained by it and is governed by it. Apprehension and retentiveness are its essence, memory and other mental faculties being its attributes.

Consequently, the discursive reason *aql-i-juzi* or *aql-i-ma'ash* is an indispensable means to the attainment of the Universal Reason. It reveals the mysteries of the Universal Reason, from which source it perpetually receives the inflow of Divine Knowledge. Divine wisdom necessitates the manifestation of these mysteries through it, and its possession is essential, although it pursues trivial things. The part seeks to attain to its whole, so also the particular reason tries to find its own whole, the Universal Reason.

Hence man deficient in reason can have no memory of his true Beloved, and so can suffer no pain of separation. He is full of folly and he cannot escape the consequences of his folly. He is eternally doomed, as he is incapable of gaining even the faint glimpse of Reality. The discursive reason also bids us keep in self abasement, says Rumi, so that the cloud of sensuality

is dissolved by our tears. It is the signal for a heavy rainfall, which causes the sky to clear.

"Since thou hast not reason, forgetfulness is thy ruler; How can a demented child play? There must be in him a part of reason in order that the part may attain to the whole. So become old in intelligence and religion, and become like the Universal Intelligence, a seer of the inward reality." ⁶⁷

God has bestowed reason upon man, to the end that he may seek to reach Him by that means. When this is ignored reason has become dangerous and must be abandoned.

"He gave you that staff that ye might approach Him with that staff ye struck even at Him in your anger." ⁶⁸

Thus, in his views about the relation of the intellect to life Rūmī anticipates the views of Schopenhauer and Bergson, who believe that the intellect is merely an instrument in the will to live a fuller life, and hence is incapable of measuring the depth of life. Fichte says that the world can be understood only from

67. The Mathnawi. Vol.IV, 2290 & 2078, Vol.VI, 2256.

68. Ibid. Vol.I, 2138.

the standpoint of spirit. All reality is the product of the ego, which is itself pure activity. So too Schelling, who expresses the same view when he says that both nature and spirit are essentially identical. Nature is nothing but the preliminary stage of spirit, much less its anti-thesis.⁶⁹ Even for Hegel thought ~~th~~ and being are identical because all that is real is rational and that is rational is real. The Absolute is a system of ante-mundane concepts, which descends into the unconscious sphere of nature, but which awakens to self-consciousness in man. In other words, all being is the embodiment of a thought: The world is a thought in becoming, everything in it being a modification of thought. For Green too, the Universe is nothing but one eternal activity, whose essence is to be self-conscious. Men are the manifestations of this Universal consciousness. Self-realisation or perfection is their moral ideal and the realisation of this ideal consists in the progressive reproduction of the divine consciousness, which reproduces itself in men alone.⁷⁰

All this goes to show that, as Khalifa Abdul Hakim rightly points out, there is a striking resemblance

69. Falckenberg: History of Modern Philosophy; p.419.

70. Ibid. pp. 489, 490, 581.

between Rūmī's views of Love, the ultimate intuition as Rūmī himself calls it, and the philosophy of intuition in Post-Kantian idealism.⁷¹ It is quite similar to the intuition of Schelling and Bergson, just as his conception of the Pure Ego is fundamentally the same as that of Fichte, for whom the absolute ego is nothing but the image of God, and the world, the image of the absolute ego.

The Perfect Man alone is the true lover. He is invested with the Divine Essence and the Divine Attributes, and thus invested he is deified and ceases to exist as an individual. His soul is a pure soul, a steel-mirror reflecting the Divine Essence and the Divine Attributes, and consequently, is the real subject and object of all love.

Laila's beauty can be beheld only through the eyes of Najm, for what was poured forth through her was nothing other than the Divine Beauty itself. The pitcher belongs to this world, the wine to the Unseen. The pitcher is evident, the wine is hidden. The uninitiated failed to see anything in her because they perceived only the pitcher and not the wine. God gives to every man poison and honey from the same pitcher.

71. Khalifa Abdul Hakim: The Metaphysics of Rūmī; p.51.

Rūmī therefore says spiritual gardens of faith, knowledge and Love bloom in the hearts of the Perfect Men, the sweet-scented Roses, as he calls them, and the spectators of all time and all existence, as Plato calls them, the friends of God, who behold beauty with the eye of the mind. They reveal the Divine mysteries and diffuse the Truth everywhere. ⁷² They love themselves and they are loved by God. They are loved by God, because God is loved by God Himself and by none else. And when God loves them, He is their ear, so that they hear by Him, their eye so that they see by Him and their tongue so that they speak by Him. "When God loves man" says Bayāzid, "He endows him with three qualities in token thereof: a bounty like that of the sea, a sympathy like that of the sun, and a humility like that of the earth."⁷³

"God has said to the saints. I am thy tongue
and eye: I am thy senses and I am Thy good
pleasure and Thy wrath." ⁷⁴

72. Plato: Symposium, 212. tr. by Jowett.

73. Nicholson (R.A.): The Mystics of Islam; p.111.

74. The Mathnavi. Vol.I, 1937.

گفت در این زبان و چشم تو : من حواس و من را و منم تو

In his poetic exuberance Rūmi describes Love as the astrolabe of divine mysteries, as the force that turns copper into gold, bitter into sweet, and as the alchemy that changes the base metal of man's self into a spiritual substance. He calls it the Boundless Ocean whose depth is invisible and of which the two worlds are merely a flake of foam, the all-comprehending Eternal

Principle in which everything dead and alive is implicit, the all-consuming dynamic force which devours everything else except itself, and as the Mighty Power which turns the heavens and the earth, rocks the sea and makes it boil like a kettle, pours rain from storm-clouds, cleaves the sky and makes the earth tremble. This tremendous Power extends to limitless boundaries. Not contained in speech and not contained in thought it overwhelms every soul that speculates on it.

In Phaedrus and Symposium Socrates speaks in praise of Love as the universal phenomenon, as the great power of nature that is stronger than death and as the great spirit which interprets between gods and men, conveying and taking across to the gods the prayers and sacrifices of men, and to men the commands and replies of the gods.⁷⁵ It is, he says, the highest inspiration

75. Plato: Symposium; 202. tr. by Jowett.

of intellectual desire, as it is the desire of the everlasting possession of the good.

Love is the Creative Power of a new life, the supreme virtue that is characterised by moral excellence and that vitalises the activity of the mind for the idea of the common good. It is the source and very essence of moral volition, the great transforming and inclusive agency that enables man to lead the best life because it is the ultimate virtue of the spiritual life which aims at Universal Good. A regenerator of all moral indignation and justice, it shifts one's attention from the private ego to the all-including other self, because it is as ready to be grateful as it is to be generous, as ready to receive as to give. Love's rise and progress are the result of continuous effort and the more perfect it becomes the more does it overwhelm the soul.

Rūmī talks of the thorny path of Love which is full of torture, agony and pain. The fire of Love, he says, consumes the lover, chastening him with a thousand agonies, its flame seizing everything but the Beloved.

"Love is that flame which, when it blazes up,
consumes everything else but the Beloved." 76

76. The Mathnawi. Vol. V, 588.

عشق آن شعله است که بدن برزخیت : هر چه جز معشوق باقی ماند نیست



Tagore repeats Rūmi's words when he says:

"But it is love, my beloved. Its pleasures and pain are boundless, and endless its wants and wealth. It is as near to you as your life, but you can never wholly know it."⁷⁷

And who is the lover? The lover is the soul separated from God, the caged bird and the fish out of water. He is the reed that weeps over its separation from the reed-bed, the spiritual world where it dwelt in the state of pre-existence. Now that he has remembered his past union with the Divine Beloved, he must go back to him. "I am eager and wakeful" says Tagore in the spirit of Rūmi, "I am a stranger in a strange land. Thy breath comes to me whispering an impossible hope. Thy tongue is known to my heart as its very own."⁷⁸ But the sorrow of the lover is incommunicable, as none but one of his own kind is in a position to offer him sympathy.

But the ardent lover never despairs. Men are given as they endeavour and if the lover is faithful in love, the Beloved also will never fail. Keep your end

77. Tagore: The Gardener; 28.

78. Ibid. 5.

of the thread, says Rūmī, and He will keep His own.

"Shed tears and lay the dust, like a passionate
lover,

For while we are in this dust we cannot see the
Beloved's face." 79

Tagore again echoes Rūmī's words:

"Pleasure is frail like a dew drop, while it
laughs it dies. But sorrow is strong and abiding.
Let sorrowful love wake in your eyes." 80

The spirit that does not wear the garment of
Love is a shame. It is a soiled mirror, soiled with
the rust of sin and worldliness and needs to be polished
by the spirit of Love. God is the Divine Beloved, the
Supreme Ideal, and it is Love that raises man to the
worth of his ideal, to the height of his aspiration.

"Know that your value is equal to the object
for which you are quivering with desire;
On this account the lover's heart is higher
than the empyrean." 81

79. Nicholson (R.A.): Selected Poems from the Divān-i-Shams-i-Tabriz; p 309

بیارانک و بومشتاق گرد و بشتان: که روی ماه نسیم تا بوی گرییم

80. Tagore: The Gardener; 27.

81. Nicholson (R.A.): Selected Poems from the Divān-i-Shams-i-Tabriz; p 254

هر چه می لرزی میدان که همان روزی: زین روی دل عاشق از غرض فزون باشد

Love is all that exists and the glory of Love is revealed by every thing in the universe. Everything that exists in the universe is brought into existence by Divine Love, so that the sublimity of Love is apprehended. God is the reality of all these things; He alone fulfils their destiny by His own Infinite Love. In the words of Rūmī, every atom, on the ground or on the air, glad or sorrowful, is dancing in an ineffable ecstasy. Thus intoxicated, all the phenomenal forms excite in him nothing but desire for the Divine beloved.

"Come forth, O day !
 The notes are dancing gay;
 The spirits in delight
 Dance wildly through the night.
 Draw near draw near !
 I'll whisper in thy ear
 His name, whose radiance
 Maketh the spheres to dance. " 82

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82. Arberry (A.J.): The Rubaiyat of Jalāl-al-Dīn Rūmī



CHAPTER VIII

THE PROBLEM OF FREE WILL

I. Rumi's conception of God is a Perfect Being and his conception of soul as a divine spark give rise to the problem of how the presence of evil in the world can be explained. Rumi is aware of the presence of evil in the world, and in spite of his conviction that this is the best of all possible worlds he does not dismiss the problem as something unreal.

The problem of evil is a perennial problem. Every system of philosophy and religion has dealt with it at one time or other. The question is not only how evil originated but also why it should exist in the world at all. Is it involved in the very structure of the world or is it introduced into it from without ?

Various solutions have been offered. The dualistic solution emphasises two powers, good and evil, that are eternally opposed to each other. Persian thought, for instance, reveals that Aariman is the Principle of evil that is at war with Ahuramazda, the Principle of good, and that there is no end to this war.



The sceptic looks at the world from a different angle. According to him, the universe somehow fails to conform to what is best, and human life, that is constantly faced with antagonistic forces, is far from being a harmonious whole. This failure, he says, is either due to some intrinsic defect in the universe itself or due to causes which God could have prevented had he so willed. In one word, the universe is not conducive to human happiness and ought to be much better in the interests of man.

Against this, the optimist is sure that the universe is a good universe in which evil is entirely subordinated to good. In spite of its burden of suffering, it manifests an increasing good, as it is the creation of a God who is good. The metaphysical explanation, as it is presented by Leibniz, upholds the view that this is the best of all possible worlds. The source of evil does not lie in the will of God. It rather lies in the limitations and imperfections inherent in finite things which involve the existence of evils. But these evils are relatively small and can be reconciled with the purpose of a benevolent God who permits evil only as a means to realise higher goods.¹

1. Falckenberg: History of Modern Philosophy; p.289.



Rumi tries to understand the problem in its physical, moral and metaphysical aspects. He asserts that to say that God wills good as well as evil imports contradiction in the Divine Nature.

There is no absolute evil in the world. All evil is relative as it bears different connotations in its relation to God and in its relation to man. God is the Absolute Good, and to Him nothing is absolutely evil. He is the Real Being to whom not-being is nothing, and evil, that springs from not-being, is nothing too. It is pure negation, in fact, intrinsically good, because it is the reflection of certain Divine attributes, which are absolutely good in themselves. It is in relation to man alone that not-being constitutes the principle of evil. All evil is phenomenal.

That means things in themselves are neither good nor bad. They are evil in so far as they lack some positive quality, that would otherwise make them good and they are good in so far as they manifest that quality. Goodness and badness are not inherent in things but consist in the attitude of the individual towards them. A thing good for one in one situation may not be so for another in the same or different situation, in one place

poison and in another medicine, as Rūmī puts it.² "Snake poison is life to the snake, but it is death in relation to man."³ Even knowledge is far from being either good or bad. It is a friend of the soul only when solely devoted to the service of the soul, but a viper when solely devoted to the body. It is not the action but the intention that is good or bad, for things are to be judged by the end towards which they are directed. Nothing is absolutely evil; every thing is only relatively so. To use Rūmī's words there is no poison or sugar that is not a foot to one and a fetter to another.⁴

In other words, evil is an illusion, an illusion arising from the diversity of the Divine Attributes reflected in human nature. What prevents man from beholding the soul of goodness everywhere is his egoism which is the source of his "unreal self" by which he is separated from God. Once the illusion is shattered, all evil disappears.

2. The Mathnawi, Vol.I, 2599.

3. Ibid. Vol.IV, 68.

4. Ibid. Vol.IV, 65-66.

پس به مطلق نباشد در جهان : به نسبت باشد این را هم بدان
در زمانه هیچ زیر و قند نیست : که یکی را پادگر را بند نیست

One is here reminded of Spinoza who invalidates the distinction between good and evil, resolving evil that is apparent into good that is real. The distinction is an appearance because all things in the ultimate reality are good. It is phenomenal and for that reason self-contradictory. Bradley calls it fiction of one's own abstraction and Spinoza calls it *entia imaginationis*, the result of a partial knowledge. Likewise Kant mentions the importance of motive and not mere consequence as that which determines the worth of an action.

In spite of all this Rūmi does not regard evil as something outside reality. He is aware that to cherish absolute optimism that sees everything as good and beautiful and to be blind to the dark side of life is no less a folly. He, therefore, admits that evil is real, although it has phenomenal and relative existence.

The world is a mixed product where right is mingled with wrong, where true and counterfeit coins are put in the same bag. This mingling of the good and bad of the true and false is necessary if man is to create within himself a real touchstone. Virtue is the choice of the good, and this choice becomes possible only in the face of the vicious. Wisdom consists in distinguishing true from false, and there can be no wisdom in the absence

of the false. The appreciation and realisation of the higher values of life presuppose the existence of that which is not valuable; and it is the resisting and negative forces of life that make man a fighter. In the words of Rūmī, had there been no faulty things in the world, all would be shrewd merchants, there being no difference between the competent and the incompetent appraiser. On the other hand, if everything were faulty and defective, knowledge would be of no advantage. In the words of Rūmī, since everything is common wood, alceswood is not to be found. Good is the abandonment of evil and this abandonment is impossible without the presence of evil. But for the hateful the desirable would not exist and since the desirable is the cessation of the hateful, this cessation is not possible without the hateful.⁵

The universe is a projected and reflected image of God. The Divine Light falls upon each and every atom of not-being which reflects some or other attribute of the Divine Being. The beautiful attributes of love and mercy are reflected in the form of heaven and angels and the terrible attributes of wrath and vengeance are reflected in the form of hell. It is man alone who has the

⁵ Arberry (A.J.): Discourses of Rūmī; p.137.



double nature, that reflects all the attributes, the terrible as well as the beautiful. And it is he alone who has equal possibilities for both good and evil. He is free to sink lower than the beast or to rise higher than the angels by the conquest of evil.⁶

Consequently, evil is necessary for the full development of his personality. All the vicissitudes of life and all its painful elements serve the purpose of bringing out and actualising the possibilities of his soul. Their presence is not inconsistent with an overruling purpose of good. The natural evil is a stimulus, which calls forth his energies by thwarting his purposes and intensifying his needs. The moral evil that assails his spiritual life is, likewise, a stepping-stone to the development of his spiritual powers. A development that does not imply progress is no more a development, and progress is the reward of self-conquest. Everything is known through its opposite and good would not be made

6. The Mathnavi, Vol.II, 2939-42.

گر نه میو بات باشد در جهان :: تا بران باشند جمله ابدان
 پس بدکارا شای سخت سهل :: چونک میی نیست چنانا اهل
 در همه عیبست دانشی سود نیست :: چون همه چوبست اینجا عود نیست
 آنک گوید جمله حقند حقست :: و آنک گوید جمله باطل او شقیست

manifest, if evil were not opposed to it. Man would not be true to himself, had he not to face temptation. Bread must be broken before it becomes nutriment, and grapes must be crushed before they yield wine. Man is led to happiness through tribulation; but for it he would not be made the paragon of existence.

In short, evil is a good in disguise. Nothing is created without a purpose, and the existence of evil serves to demonstrate Divine Omnipotence and display the infinite perfections of the Divine nature. Without it Divine Mercy will be nullified and Divine Omnipotence not displayed.

Rumi, thus, not only admits that evil exists but also endeavours to show that evil, in so far as it exists, is a part of the divine order and harmony. For him evil is consistent with the ultimate well-being of the universe which is the object of the Divine Will.

"In reality every foe of yours is your medicine:
he an elixir and beneficial and one that seeks
to win your heart." ⁷

7. Ibid. Vol.IV, 94.

در حقیقت هر عیب و داری تست :- کیمیا و نافع و دلجوئی تست

One might object that a God who is the creator of evil must be Himself evil. Rūmi replies that the ugliness of the picture is no evidence of the ugliness of the painter. That he paints the ugly too shows the perfection of his skill. But for this he would not be a perfect artist.

Again, even if God wills evil, He does not will it as an end in itself but as a means to a greater good. The conflict between good and evil and the suffering it brings with itself, ultimately lead to the triumph itself of good. The powers opposed to the good are its instruments and are a necessity required for its manifestation. Sin itself produces the consciousness of sin and by so doing paves the way for the negation of it, and for the acceptance of a new and higher principle of life. But for this fact, much good that is in the world would not be realised.

God Himself transcends the opposition of good and evil, as He is supra-moral. Morality points to an end beyond itself and reaches its goal in God in whom all moral values are transformed and transcended. It is to our limited outlook that there appear good and evil, and it is in this moral sphere that the law becomes valid and necessary. But the Divine Power never ceases to make



for righteousness even in the world of limited ends. It sustains the moral order, commanding and forbidding, maintains ethical relations with men and works for good in the world.

II. The problem of evil gives rise to the problem of free-will. Opinions differ in the face of the fact that man is bound by the inner forces of his own disposition and character as well as by the outer forces of the wider life of the universe.

The determinists are the deniers of free-will as they believe that all things including the will are determined by causes. On this theory it is an illusion that man is free to choose one thing rather than another or that he can make his actions different from what they are in any way. Consistent Rationalism, which emphasises the unity and uniformity of the processes of Reason, runs parallel to determinism. Logic is identical with Necessity and the Realm of Logos excludes all chance and all choice. So there can be no room for equally possible alternatives nor for any freedom of choice.

The indeterminists, on the other hand, believe that nothing is pre-determined. The self-determinists are the upholders of the view that man is neither completely

free nor is completely bound by necessity. They admit the dominant part played by the self in all acts of rational will. Motives have no dynamic efficiency apart from the self.

The scientific conception, which lays stress on the point that the human nature is a part of the nature of things, denies freedom to man. Man, like anything else, is an evolved product, and the original source of his activity lies without rather than within himself.

Materialism also leads to the same conclusion. All that exists is matter. The so called spirit is nothing but its complex manifestation. That means there can be no freedom, since all freedom implies spiritual independence. And materialism, in so far as it regards spirit as a mere product of matter, makes its life bound to the material law. From this point of view moral life can only be a series of adjustments of the individual to his environment.

Likewise, Pantheism makes man's conception of his freedom^m illusion of his ignorance. The human personality is an expression of the all-comprehending Divine Nature from which all things follow, and as an aspect of God man cannot be free. All freedom can be predicted of God alone.

Spinoza presents this view in its pure form. Substance is identical with nature; it is identical with nature because, it is its very nature to be so. And man is nothing but a mere link in the necessary evolution of the universe. Consequently higher freedom belongs to God alone. Man is bound by necessity. "Everything is in God, and all things which are made, are made by the laws of the infinite nature of God, and necessarily follow from the necessity of his essence." ⁸

Likewise, Hegelianism invalidates the freedom of man, as it offers no place for the personality of man. Hegel insists upon the immanence of the noumenal in the phenomenal, of the Divine in the human experience. The real is the rational and everything follows from the necessity of the Divine nature. The self too is the passing manifestation of the Absolute Reality. The one self manifests itself in nature as well as in man and it is impersonal. Consequently, personality is nothing but a mere appearance.

This is similar to Bradley's view that the soul is not an ultimate fact. It is appearance. Everything attains perfection in the Absolute. But the finite disappears in being accomplished. The individual cannot

8. Spinoza: Ethics; pp.14-15.

become an harmonious system in himself, nor can he attain to complete self-assertion. In other words, man is nothing but a vehicle of the Divine manifestation. And in so far as this is so, his personality is only seeming, both his freedom and moral life dissolved together.

Kant, however, tries to escape determinism by removing the ethical self out of the empirical sphere. For him, 'Thou Shalt' of the moral law implies 'Thou canst'; and as a rational being man is free as he comes under the autonomy of reason. But in so far as he acts from impulse, he acts irrationally, and is not free. It is, therefore, man's ethical task to free himself from the life of sensibility and to gain the freedom that belongs to him as a subject of Pure Reason.

It is evident that this is not actual freedom. Freedom is freedom in choosing between good and evil. It is freedom of choosing the evil equally with the good. Only such a freedom can be the real basis of responsibility and obligation. Again, freedom must be realised in the very necessity of nature itself and not in a life of sheer reason as Kant believes. Kant actually reduces freedom to a mere abstraction by emphasising the distinc-

tion between the phenomenal and the noumenal, and by making this distinction absolute.⁹

In Islam the problem begins with the Qurān. The Qurān looks at the relation between the human and the Divine will and their interaction in an apparently paradoxical way, supporting both freedom as well as necessity with equal force. The question here is whether the omnipotence and omniscience of God and the predestination of good and evil in Islam leave any room for the independence of action and the responsibility of the individual.

The doctrine of Divine Unity implies pre-destination. Before the Omnipotence and omniscience of God there can be no independent working of a created will. God is the Creator of everything - good as well as evil, and He knows before-hand how they would act. But He is not responsible for evil as He created everything with goodness and truth. He does what He pleases, guiding to the right those whom He pleases and leading astray those whom He pleases, for as the Qurān maintains 'for anyone to whom God giveth no light, there is no light.'¹⁰ In a word, nothing happens that is not recorded in a decree

9. Seth (James): A Study of Ethical Principles: pp. 396-97.

10. The Qurān. xxiv. 40.

before it is brought into existence; and so, not what man wills, but what God wills happens.

But the Scripture presents the other side of the problem too with the same enthusiasm. Although, God created both good and evil, He did give man, freedom to choose between the two, between Light and Darkness. He guides aright only those who believe in Him and do good. and leads astray only those who reject faith and do evil. In other words, every soul gets only that which it has itself earned, enjoying every good that it earns, and suffering every ill that it earns. 'Verily never will God change the condition of a people until they change it themselves.' 11

Now the Muslims who sought to solve this problem with the help of the teachings of the Qurān faced a dilemma. Human nature affirmed both sides of the question, and in the face of the diverse statements of the Scripture it was but natural that individual inclinations, in contact with different types of foreign cultures, decided in favour of one or other aspect of the problem. The Prophet laid emphasis both on faith as well as on the transformation of will, and urged men to action. after

11. Ibid. xiii. 11.

him there arose a class of men who were strong men of action and also a class of men who were staunch fatalists, both seeking the traditions suitable to their view point. The former answered his call for action, while the latter followed his advice to trust in God. But later on, there developed passive and quietistic tendencies which resulted in a false conception of resignation among people who led an idle life, Al-mutawakkilūn, resigned to the will of God, as they called themselves. Dissatisfied with their wrong way of living Caliph Ūmar is said to have advised them "First to sow the seed and then to trust in God."¹²

So, the Muslims separated themselves into two schools: the Qādiriyya that affirmed man's responsibility for his actions, and the Jabariyya that denied this responsibility and professed the doctrine of predestination. The Mutazilites were the successors of the Qādiriyya. They are the rationalists of Islam and the supporters of the Divine Justice and Unity, 'the people of Unity and justice' as they called themselves. Starting from justice and rationality of God, they concluded that man is responsible for his actions. If he were not free to choose between good and evil, he would not have been rewarded or punished by a just God.

12. Khalifa Abdulhakim: The Metaphysics of Rūmī; pp. 67-68.

The Ash'arites, named after their founder Abu'l Hasan Ash'ari, presented the rigid metaphysical doctrine and attempted at a synthesis of the two conceptions of free-will and compulsion. This attempt was closely connected with Ghazzali's view of Causation and Being. Ghazzali, who is one of the greatest expounders of the Ash'arite doctrine, believes that both existence and power belong to God alone. God is the only Substance, *Jawhar*, because He exists by Himself. He is not only the First Cause, but He is the Only Cause. Consequently all actions ensue from God alone. Man is nothing but only a locus, *mahal*, and channel, *muja*, an inert stage or, rather, a passive spectator. He desires because he cannot help desiring. His desires are beyond his choice and are created in him without his own choice; and it is these desires that put his powers into motion.

This is Determinism pure and simple wherein man has no place whatsoever. But Ghazzali tries to defend man's responsibility and Divine Justice by maintaining that man is responsible for his actions in so far as he is the object, the ground or the locus on which they take place. God realises His purposes through him and to that extent he is free. But is man's being the locus due to his own free choice? Ghazzali replies, No, for that too

is an act of God. God is the central link in the chain of necessary causation, which proceeds from Him alone. Man is simply led to paradise or hell in this chain of necessity.¹³

So, once again we are led to unqualified predestination from which Ishaazāli tries to extricate himself, but in vain. In other words, the Ash'arites have failed to reconcile the question of the responsibility of man for his action and the justice of God with their conception of Unity.

Most of the exponents of pantheistic Sufism also spoke in terms of Determinism of which they made no secret. For them there does not arise any question of choice at all because man's existence is simply non-existence. If at all he exists he does not exist through himself. Consequently, neither the good nor the evil proceeds from him. The relation of actions to him is only apparent, hence unreal. As a matter of fact, even the very idea of this relation is false, for man was simply not there when Destiny created his actions. To assert the independence of his ego, therefore, is an error. If man chooses to act it is for some predestined purpose of which he has no knowledge whatsoever.

13. Ibid. p.71.

Rūmi is against determinism of all kinds. He believes that man must be explained as an ethical being. His moral life is bound up with his freedom and his right of freedom with the integrity of his moral personality. Determinism fails to comprehend the indispensable part played by the self in choosing and willing. It tells us that man is no more responsible for his good or evil deeds, because his deeds follow strictly from motives which are determined by his nature and environment. It is these motives that bring about the deed, by acting and reacting on one another in such a way that the strongest prevails in the end and results in the corresponding act.

Rūmi does admit that man as a natural and physical being is subject to the natural laws which are predestined. But, he says, man is predestined only to that extent. As a moral being he is free to choose and decide between alternative courses of action. Moreover, how do we know that motives and acts are related by mechanical causality ?

Every man has his own moral sphere determined for him by two factors, internal and external. The internal factor is his own nature and disposition and the external factor is the force of circumstances or environment, physical and social. In so far as there is this determination



the field of man's activity is defined for him. But there is still room left for his freedom because there exists the possibility of good and evil, and the moral alternative lies within this sphere, however much it may have been determined by different factors. The choice belongs to the individual alone. And, in so far as he exercises this power, his own nature as well as the outward circumstances are nothing but a raw material out of which he creates his own character. The instinct to choose is latent in man and what brings it into action is the sight of innumerable temptations offered by the world. Both the good and the evil objects of desire are presented to man in order that the power to resist evil and choose good may be stimulated. The operation of the evil forces is, thus, limited by this faculty alone which enables man to choose, whether or not he will accept the temptation offered to him, a truth which Rumi expresses thus :

"The power of choice resides in your inward part, but it does not wound its hand till it sees a Joseph. Sight of the desired object is the means of moving the power of choice to exert itself just as blowing raises sparks from the fire." 14

14. The Mathnavi. Vol.V, 2975, 2979.

اختیار و قدرت پاکست :: تا ندید او بدستی کف را نخواست
دیدن آینه جنبش آن اختیار :: همچو نفعی ز آتش انگیزد شرار

Now is the pantheistic absorption of man in God an adequate explanation of man as a moral being. The moral relation between man and God is a personal relation. It is a relation of will, his highest conception of this relation being that of co-operation. Again, it is the conception of human freedom of independent moral initiative that is the source of this relation because it is the moral burden of evil that sends man beyond himself to God.

Morality implies a union and communion of the human will with the Divine will, and what is necessary is the spiritual difference or separateness of being that would give the union its moral significance. Man's "I will" is an essential pre-requisite for his 'Thy will be done'. Man, therefore, cannot be regarded as a passive vehicle of the energy of God. Activity is the category of his life and to regard his life as a mere reproduction of the life of God, to naught the integrity of his personality into that of God, is to render the whole ethical attitude an impossibility and to undermine all morality. It is as good as negating Divine greatness itself.

It is an undisputed psychological fact that man's deeds are volitional. The animals act blindly from immediate impulse. Man acts with reflection and from deliberate

choice because he alone is given to conflicting desires and ideals. Different desires dominate his mind and, as Mackenzie points out, when there is a conflict between them, man is at strife with himself, because it is not that different desires conflict with each other, but that different universes of desires, each with a set of desires of its own, conflict with each other. Each desire belongs to a particular universe and has no meaning apart from that universe which is constituted of the totality of man's character as presented at the time of desiring. And man chooses not the strongest desire but the desire that belongs to the strongest universe.¹⁵ And what is his choice? It consists in the direction and guidance of the impulsive tendencies to act in a particular way. The temporary inhibition of the impulsive tendencies leads to deliberation upon the various courses of action possible in the circumstances. Then follows the decision or choice, wherein one accepts one or the other of the conflicting ideals.¹⁶

Only man is endowed with freedom of choice in the whole creation of God, because he alone carries his

15. Mackenzie (John): A Manual of Ethics; pp.34-35.

16. Seth (James): A Study of Ethical Principles; pp.44-46.

principle of life within himself. At the core of his personality he has that indefinable something which refuses to respond to outside influences. As such, neither the earthly nor the heavenly influence has the power to determine his course of action. He knows how he would act and it is this endowment that makes him the paragon of creation.

This is similar to the view of Kant that man alone is an autonomous creative. All creatures, including man, are driven by impulse and sensibility. But it is man alone who knows that he is so driven by impulses because he alone is endowed with a rational element also. This realisation creates in him the urge to free himself from all sensibility and thereby to regain his own true nature of pure reason.

What separates man from the rest of creation is his freedom of choice, whence gain all work and service their value. In the words of Rumi :

" Free will is the salt of devotion. The revolution of the celestial spheres has neither reward nor punishment, as it is

involuntary. Free-will is a merit at the time of the Reckoning." 17

The experience of the moral man, his remorse and retribution, his praise and blame, his reward and punishment, all imply the conviction that his destiny, partly at least, is in his own hands. These feelings are not the feelings of an involuntary sinner, nor can they be explained apart from the fact that the doer of an action has freedom to choose his own course of action.

Moral guilt can exist only where a self-conscious subject distinguishes himself from his natural impulses and desires and reflects upon them. To say that one's act issued necessarily from one's character is to admit that one could not have willed otherwise than he did. In that case repentance for it would be meaningless. But repentance does not simply mean that one's feelings now are at discord with one's feelings at the time when the sinful act was committed. It also implies the consciousness that one might have acted differently and that one ought to have acted differently but did not. In other

17. The Mathnavi. Vol.III; 3287-88.

اختیار آمد عبادت را نکردی و در نه ای نکردی بنا خواہ این نیک
گرددش او را نہ اجروند عبادت : کہ اختیار آمد ضرورت حساب

words what it implies is the belief that different possibilities of action were open and that something better was possible.

"If there were no free will what is this shame and what is this sorrow and guilty confusion and abashment? why is there chiding between masters and pupils? Why is the mind changing from plans already formed?" 18

All this simply means that the very fact that the notion of moral wrong or transgression of the law occupies one's mind is a proof of one's consciousness of the good in the form of a law or an ideal. As a matter of fact, the consciousness of sin develops in man only when he recognises a norm or rule to which he ought to conform but has failed to do so. And it is this consciousness itself that prepares the way for its extinction.

Consequently, as Rumi points out, to be capable of sinning one must be capable of rational choice too. Man is free to choose. He cannot surrender this freedom to nature and it is his moral experience that gathers

18. Ibid. Vol.I, 619-20.

گر سودی اختیارین شرم چیست : دین دریغ و فحلت و آزارم چیست
زیراستادن و شاگردان پرست : دالران نه بیرحمان پرست



itself up in the conviction of his infinite superiority to nature.

Again, the very immediate consciousness of freedom enjoyed at the time of acting when there is conflict of motives and deliberation bespeaks this freedom. The active self is directly experienced as a free cause; the individual expresses his own character in the very act of willing. To have thus acted as one's character determines is no sacrifice of freedom. It is rather self-determination, in which the character is the concrete self that explains the action with reference to the ends sought to be realised.

Furthermore, it is this immediate awareness of one's own essential dignity and independence as a moral person that leads man to the conception of one greater than himself. Only such an affirmation of the reality of the moral life can give a higher view of God and enable man to conceive the possibility of a union with Him, a union that is not only a union of thought, ^{with thought} but also of will with will.

Hence, Rumi says, a necessitarian is worse than the upholder of the doctrine of absolute free-will because he is a thorough going sceptic, denying the universal

fact of human consciousness. The human will is not at all in need of factors beyond itself to be explained. And one who is blind to this manifest power is a worse victim of illusion than one who is blind to the invisible action of God because, as Rūmi points out, it is more reasonable to deny the existence of that which is beyond perception than the existence of that which is perceivable. Even animals, he maintains, recognise this inward sense. A camel, when beaten, attacks the driver and not the stick. He further argues that while gratifying one's own selfish desires man does not talk of compulsion. It is only when he is called to deeds of righteousness for which he has no inclination, that he pleads compulsion.¹⁹

The physical and mental faculties bestowed by God upon man are virtually a call to action. The master has put a spade in the slave's hand, in order that he may use it. The very fact that man is endowed with reason and is enabled to reflect on the consequences of his actions speaks for itself. To use Rūmi's words: Hand and spade alike are God's implicit signs; so also our power of thinking upon the end are His explicit declarations.

19. Ibid. Vol.IV, 1401.

هر چه نیست خواست داری اختیار : هر چه هست خواست آری اضطرار

All things in the world can be classified into those that are alterable and those that are unalterable. Predetermination is true only in regard to the unalterable side. Man is free in so far as the alterable side is concerned, as he can alter the alterable.

Rāmi presents this argument in a dialogue between the Prophets and the infidels. The infidels maintain that no amount of preaching can change them for better as they are so constituted that it is impossible for them to withdraw themselves from what God has endowed them with. Earth cannot assume the qualities of water, nor can water assume the qualities of honey. "God hath set a lock upon our hearts", they argued; "none can prevail against the Creator. To everyone He has allotted a certain course; how should a mountain by any effort become as a straw?"²⁰

The prophets admit that anything cannot be transformed into anything else. God has certainly given maladies such as lameness and blindness for which there is no remedy. But then, He has also given maladies for which there is remedy. If there are certain qualities that cannot be changed, there are also qualities that are only accidental, and can be changed and moulded. And man's

20. Ibid. Vol.III, 2900-2908.

moral self is something that can be so remedied and transformed into better. Sand cannot become clay but earth can become so. Stone cannot become gold, but copper can become so. Most of man's maladies have a cure. Man has only to seek them in earnest.²¹

In other words, predestination is applicable only to the Laws of God. The very conception of law implies that it is eternal and unchangeable, because law, in order to be law, must be, in its essence, eternal and unchangeable. The laws of Nature are true for all time or rather, they are 'out of time' to use metaphysical terminology, and 'predestined', to use theological terminology. Now the uniformity and unalterability of moral causation also is as necessary as the uniformity and unalterability of other laws of Nature. The moral Law is pre-destined.

But then, it is only the form of the Law that is pre-destined, and not its content, which is free and variable. It is pre-destined that all actions shall have reactions corresponding to them, that virtue will bring its own reward and vice its own punishment. But it is not pre-destined whether a man will choose virtue or vice. In

21. Ibid. Vol.III, 2909-2916.





other words, individual choice is not pre-destined, although both Truth and error are governed by law that is eternal and pre-destined.

God is not an arbitrary ruler. He is essentially just and impartial, and His justice consists in giving things their suitable place. Before Him the honest and the dishonest, the faithful and the infidel, both cannot have the same rank. Every act brings about its own result as good and evil lead to consequences corresponding to them, and God rewards and punishes man accordingly. If man chooses a crooked path the Law of Destiny, of necessity, leads him into error. And if he chooses the right path he is led to the Truth by the same Law of Destiny. The hand of Destiny is not moved by an arbitrary will. All actions are weighed atom by atom in the scale of Destiny so that if one man's labour were to exceed that of another even by a single mole that single mole is weighed in God's balance.²²

God's mercy is all-encompassing. He wrongs no one, inflicts unmerited hardship on no one. If a calamity befalls man, it should be regarded as the inevitable consequence of his own wrong-doing. He has only to

22. Ibid. Vol.V, 3145.

repent and return to the right path. Obedience and disobedience to God are not on the same level; says the Qurān, 'honesty and stealing are not on the same level. God does not let the reward of the righteous be lost.'²³ Rumi repeats these words, when he says, "The pen wrote that every action has the effect and consequence appropriate to it. If you do wrong in this world, you will suffer wrong in the next. If you act rightly here, the result will be your felicity there. If you behave unjustly, you are damned. If you show justice you eat the fruit of blessedness."²⁴

And after all, God does not command man to do what is beyond his power. Nor does man himself deliberate between impossible alternatives. He ponders over alternatives that are equally open to him and it is this deliberation that bespeaks his freedom. The very fact that he distinguishes between possible and impossible alternatives is an evidence of his capacity to accomplish the former at least. 'Ought' and 'Can' are correlative

23. The Qurān. ix. 121.

24. The Mathnawi, Vol.V, 3132-34.

پس علم نبوست کہ بر کار را : لائق آن بہت تا اثر و ہذا
 کثروری جف القلم کثر آیدت : راستی آری سعادت زایدت
 علم آری مدیر سے جف القلم : عمل آری بر فوری جف القلم

terms, or rather, as Kant puts it, "Thou shalt" of the moral law implies 'Thou Canst'.

Man is free; and his freedom of will does not mean the liberty of indifference to values, for a will that is blind to values and can as readily will the good as the bad, cannot be called a moral will, nor can the deed proceeding from a purely arbitrary act of will have any moral significance. Freedom means self-determination rather than indetermination; and free-will is something that cannot be separated from a judgement of value on different possible courses of action.

Satan, who is the embodiment of intellect, is a personification of Determinism, Adam is a personification of freedom. Both Adam and Satan committed sin. Adam admitted having committed it out of his own choice and begged for forgiveness while Satan attributed his own sin to God.

The problem of free-will is closely connected with the problem of tawakkul, trustful renunciation, which also emerged from the Qurān itself. The Qurān in various places speaks highly of those who have absolute trust in God, and rely on Him entirely even for their daily bread. 'And rely upon God' it says 'if you are

believers, for God loves those who rely upon Him'. The Prophet too expressed himself to the same effect. He who devotes himself entirely to God receives livelihood from God from an unknown source. It is he alone who devotes himself to the world that is entrusted to the world.

But the Qurān and the Tradition are also full of passages emphasising the value of work. The life of the Prophet himself was a living example of incessant work and many sided activity. He never neglected to employ the means necessary for the ends he had to realise, and never ceased to search, in spite of the fact that his trust in God was the greatest. His very forbidding of monkery bespeaks this attitude of his toward the problem. None but the earner of daily bread can be a true Beloved to God.

Once again the muslims faced a dilemma. Absolute trust in God seemed to imply a completely passive attitude to life. Seeking of means to satisfy the needs of life would be nothing but a sheer violation of that trust.

The over-emphasis of trust and passivity inevitably led to quietism, which became a prominent feature of many sufis. Sufism actually begins with the fear of God,



and so, the sufis naturally tried to escape from all that would incur the wrath of God. The contrast with the world offered temptations and created chances of falling into sin. The only way of release from such a fate was to cut oneself away from the world altogether.

But amidst these innumerable sufis there were a few who believed in personal endeavour as a necessary prerequisite for a healthy life. Mysticism, that has a large number of its followers given to quietism, found the greatest upholder of activism in Rumi, who advocated a free shaping of one's own destiny. "If you are putting trust in God", he says, "put trust in Him as regards your work; sow the seed, then rely upon the almighty." ²⁵

The world is real. It is real and rational, far from being a vain product of blind forces. As the scripture reveals, not for sport did God create the heavens and the earth and all that is between. For Rumi creation is a manifestation of the Divine Glory and a stepping-stone to the Divine Glory too. It is an abode of deception only to those who have an unending attachment to it, to those who forget that the real life of man is in

25. Ibid. Vol.I, 947.

گزشتہ کتاب کی درکار کی: نکست کن یس تکیہ برجبار کی

the world beyond. In other words the world is the world of God and the world with God. What brings discredit to man is the world without God. To regard the world and God as two irreconcilable contradictories, therefore, is an error.

Nor does the spirit of Islam encourage asceticism of any kind. Islam has made lawful the enjoyment of all worldly goods, provided man keeps within limits necessary for both personal and social well-being. All its laws were based on the presupposition that the individual is a citizen, a member of a social and political organisation, hence an honest earner of livelihood. All this is consistent with Rumi's attitude.

"Free-will is the endeavour to thank God for His beneficence; your necessitarianism takes the Divine gift of free-will out of your hand."²⁶

Man is born to struggle, to struggle against destiny. Without this struggle his hidden, unrealised potentialities will never be actualised, because what brings into existence new powers and faculties in him is evil and resistance that surrounds him everywhere. As a

26. Ibid. Vol.I, 938.

matter of fact, human history itself is nothing but a perpetual overcoming of resistance, through which a fuller, richer and nobler life has become possible for man. In its absence the realisation of values becomes an impossibility. All striving and fighting ceases, so also all development of virtue which is the reward of one's conquest of evil. Man's struggle against destiny, therefore, is not his helplessness against destiny. It is, on the other hand, the very means of his freedom, of his betterment and progress.

To throw oneself earnestly into the spiritual warfare is the divinely ordained duty which cannot bring man into conflict with God. To neglect this duty by pleading compulsion is not reasonable. The Divine Destiny and Decree are like man's essence and attributes as man's essence is predisposed in accordance with what the Divine Destiny requires. Therefore, fleeing from this Destiny and Decree means fleeing from one's own essence; and that is an impossibility.

"Endeavour is not a struggle with Destiny, because Destiny itself has laid this endeavour upon us." 27

27. Ibid. Vol.I, 976.

باقضايت پيغمبر زدن نبود جماد : نزك ابن راسم قضاير ما بناد

This is similar to Fichte's Ethical Monism which Rūmī seems to anticipate. It was the central conception of Fichte that the resistance offered by the so-called non-ego has its source in the very nature of the ego itself. The ego can develop only by overcoming this resistance. The Qurān refers to God's trial of man through calamities and misfortunes. And it is Rūmī who develops it into his own theory of evil and resistance as the means of actualising man's possibilities.

In spite of all this, Rūmī never fails to insist that it is the creative act of God that brings into existence all actions of man. God is, and everything besides Him is naught. There is no agent other than He; no act but His. The Divine Power of Will never ceases to work upon His creation even for a single moment. It sets down on their thought whatever It Wills, putting one thing and obliterating another — putting anger and taking acquiescence away, putting stinginess and taking generosity away, to use Rūmī's words. This process of imprinting and obliterating goes on incessantly and endlessly.

Man is in the grip of Divine Omnipotence too, as is any other object of creation. God employs him upon

various tasks only as an instrument and a medium, through which these tasks are accomplished. Man is unaware and unconscious of God like the bow that is unaware in whose hand it is. Consequently, none of the actions that issue from man is of his own creation. All actions, in so far as they issue from him, issue through the medium of instrument he possesses, such as reason or spirit. He cannot be the Creator of actions performed through these media because he is neither capable of assembling these instruments, nor are the instruments themselves subject to his control. He cannot act without these instruments; and he cannot create these instruments. Again, the meaning and advantage of the action is not limited to the extent of his imagination, however intentionally he may have performed it. Only God knows the total advantage of the deed, the innumerable fruits which it shall bear, and these do not pass into the understanding of man. 28

In other words man is absolutely under the Divine control. He is nothing but a tool in the hand of God. All actions attributed to him are created and brought into being by God. He does not create his own action, because he is incapable of creating his own action. Creation of

28. Arberry (A.J.): Four Discourses of Rumi; p.207.

an action involves that its Creator should consider and comprehend every phase of it simultaneously. God alone is capable of such a comprehension. Man has power over his actions only in so far as they proceed from him and are chosen by Him. Even his retribution is to be regarded as a Divine manifestation of the form of idea immanent in all that appears under the form of human action. God says in the Qurān "Thou didst not throw when thou throwest; but God threw." ²⁹ Rūmi agrees with the scripture as he says:

"If we let fly an arrow, that action is not from us: we are only the bow, and the shooter of the arrow is God." ³⁰

Every man's action is pre-disposed by God to that for which he was created, with the result that he chooses good or evil according to God's knowledge of his destiny. The predispositions given by God constitute one's original nature, and so they are the means of attaining to perfection. In other words, the actions of a person are absolutely good in so far as God brings them into being in him, to the end that His diverse attributes may

29. The Qurān; 8.17.

30. The Mathnavi. Vol.I, 616.

be manifested, however much they may be good or bad from the standpoint of the religious law. Consequently, it is only by acting agreeably to one's own God-given nature that one in reality identifies oneself with the Divine purpose in creation. That which God has given man He made sweet to him in bringing it into existence. ³¹

Chazzāli gives a similar conception. He classifies all actions ensuing from man into three classes: *tabāi*, natural, *irādi*, volitional and *ikhtiyāri*, selectional. When a man stands in water, he says, his body touches the water and that is a natural action. When he breathes with his lungs, his will becomes involved in the action so that it becomes a volitional action. And when he writes with his hand, it is a selectional action, hence an act of choice, because the writer is free to write or not to write.

But this freedom is only apparent because the will to choose is dependent upon knowledge. It is knowledge that gives the decision after examining the various alternatives. The will does nothing but obeys the decision, and sets the powers into motion. Now, man is not free in the decisions of his knowledge either, because

31. Ibid. Vol. I, 420.



reason is something impersonal. The whole movement starts from this impersonal element and ends in an action by a series of necessary steps. And what is the part played by man, in whom the whole process takes place ? Ghazzālī says, he is nothing but the stage, the only real actor on the stage being God.³²

Nevertheless, Rūmī maintains this is not compulsion for God destroys human resolutions only to inspire man with humility so that he remains ever conscious of God's Universal Power. But He allows him to sow the seed of expectation too, also for the reason that His Will is exercised in a complete manner. The overpowering sinner is over-powered in the very act of overpowering, made captive at the very moment of his victory. In other words, as all human actions are decreed by the Divine Omnipotence, so also the power to choose in man is decreed by it, even though his exercise of that power is conditioned by God's eternal knowledge of his destiny. And this, as Rūmī says, is not compulsion or jabr; it is rather jabbāri, almightiness and that is for the sake of humility.³³

32. Khalifa Abdulhakim: The Metaphysics of Rūmī; pp.72-3.

33. The Mathnawi. Vol.I, 617.

این نه جبرین معنی جباریت است :: ذکر جبارے برای زاریست

Freedom is not an end in itself. It is the means to a higher end, which is the predetermination to live according to one's own higher self. It is self-determination on the transcendental level wherein both freedom and determination are synthesised into a higher determination, the self-imposed, voluntary determination to live for the Highest.

That means determinism is of two kinds: forced determinism and free determinism, the latter being a self-determined self-limitation for the ideal. Life of man begins with determinism of the former kind in which he is compelled to choose a course either by a force outside of him or by duty imposed on him from outside. But this determinism on the lower level develops into free choice in him, only to rise to determinism again, this time a higher determinism, wherein he makes a free offer of his freedom for better.

This transformation of lower compulsion into higher compulsion which is the self-imposed compulsion, that is spontaneous, is the result of love. The mystic knows God to be Love; and he is one with his Love. The power of acting just as one likes does not mean true freedom for him. It is rather the self-determination brought

about by love, the inward urge in him to merge his own will in the Divine Will and thereby to make the Divine Will his own. In the depth and unity of this universal urge all opposition between freedom and compulsion disappears. So, there is no question of his being compelled, he alone being the one who enjoys the rapture of self-abandonment and the perfect freedom of feeling and acting in harmony with the will of the Beloved. Hence Rūmī observes, Compulsion is felt only by a non-lover. To know God is to love Him and the lover alone knows Him and loves Him in his selfless communion with Him.

"He that is overpowered in Our grace is not compelled; nay, he is one who freely chooses devotion to Us. In sooth the end of free-will is that his free-will should be lost here." 34

Rūmī here reconciles determinism and free-will in a special way. He maintains that it is neither self-determinism in the Kantian sense of man as an autonomous creature, nor is it soft-determinism in the sense of the higher self-determining the lower. God allows man to be free, yet man is not free to choose his actions because God wants him to realise that the Divine Omnipotence is

34. Ibid. Vol.IV, 401-402.

آنکه او مغلوب اندر دلف ماست .: نیست مظهر بک مختار و لاست
مختار ای اختیار است خود .: که اختیارش گردد اینها مقتدر



greater than man's freedom. For the sake of inspiring man with humility God destroys man's freedom. This type of reconciliation is a synthesis of a philosophical and mystical approach to the problem.

Consequently, freedom for the sake of freedom is not the goal of man. Man is endowed with freedom only to offer himself freely to the higher necessity of his real self, and since this transformation is not possible by any means other than love, he must give himself entirely to love. Spiritual development pre-supposes harmony between man and God and this can be achieved only by placing oneself at the disposal of God and by surrendering to His Will. Again, it is the realisation that man has a place in the cosmic plan and that his activities have some significance for the execution of the Divine plan, that makes his life meaningful and purposeful. In this sense of participation in carrying out God's design all contradictory conceptions of freedom and necessity are synthesised, all separation between the creature and the Creator and all opposition of wills are dissolved. In the pure souls of the lovers they are transformed into pure light, as drops of water are turned into pearls in an oyster.

Exactly how this transformation is brought about

through love is very much a matter of experience. Do not question, says Rūmi, how blood is turned into musk, or how, base metal is turned into gold and how bread is turned into life. 35

"Endeavour to gain freshness and spiritual grace from God's cup of love: then you will become selfless and volitionless. Then all volition will belong to that Wine and you will be excusable like a drunken man." 36

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35. Ibid. Vol.I, 1470-75.

36. Ibid. Vol.V, 3105-06.

جہد کی کڑواہٹ حق یا بی نئی :- بے خود و بے اختیار نہ کہ شوی
 نگاہ آنی را بود کل اختیار :- تو شوی معذور و ملق مست و ار

CHAPTER IXCREATION - AS THE MYSTIC SEES

I. Evil is an empirical fact. But considered from the ultimate point of view it is a means of attaining the goal of perfection. The universe was created by God not only as a self-manifestation, but also as a training ground for the purification of souls, 'a vale of soul-making' as Keats calls it.

The curiosity about the nature and origin of things is indorn in man and it is this curiosity that has prompted him to undertake a search for a creator. Religion has been one of the vital forces that has greatly influenced man's speculations about the origin of the universe. Being his native personal endowment, this element is common in the consciousness of all generations. The metaphysical view of poets, philosophers and saints have contributed much to these growing speculations of man about the idea of creation.

The theories of the primitive man matched his barbaric manner and customs, his crude emotions and conduct, and he has landed into all kinds of errors when he tried to explain how the world was made. He deified beasts, birds and trees, ascribing to them the highest attributes, and thus mingling the mythical element with the religious.

But in spite of the fact that his theories were incredibly childish and whimsical, the conception of a Being, who is the maker of all things and who is the immortal guardian of man's life, was invariably present.

The search after the ultimate cause of all things was characteristic of the early Upanisadic philosophy in India. The Upanisads sought to reach that which abides amidst all changes, from which all things spring, to which they owe their being, and into which finally get resolved. The Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad regards water as the source of all things, and does not believe in God as the creator of water.¹ The Greek philosopher Thales, likewise, believes that water is the origin of all things. But Raikva holds that air is the origin of all things and the end of all things. This conception of his is similar to that of Anaximenes, who regards air as the beginning and end of everything.

The Koṭha Upaniṣad tells us that Fire assumed all forms in the universe,² a conception similar to that of Heraclitus who asserts that Fire is exchanged for all things. The Chāndogya Upaniṣad says that the first thing to evolve from the Primeval Being was Fire. After come

1. Bṛh. Up. V. 5.1.

2. Koṭha. Up. II. 5.

from Fire and earth from water.³ But while Heraclitus maintains that Fire is the origin of all things, the Chândogyaupanisad lays stress on the point that Fire was the first evolution from the Primal Being.

In the same Upanisad we also find the doctrine of space as the origin of all things. Pravehana Jaitish maintains that things emerge from space and are ultimately absorbed into it. Space is higher than air, fire, water and earth.⁴ Thales, Anaximenes, Heraclitus and Empedocles repeat these Upanisadic conceptions of water, air, fire and earth as the source of all things. Philolaus, however, introduces the notion of space as the origin of all existence.

The Taittiriyaupanisad teaches us that only Not-Being existed in the beginning of all existence. It is the primary existent from which Being was born.⁵ The Īśā-
kanyakopanishad gives a similar conception when it says that nothing existed in the beginning of all things. Everything was covered by Death. Death determined to have a self and began to move. From it were born the elements, water, earth and fire. But this Not-Being is not Absolute Not-Being; it is only relative Not-Being, something contrasted with concrete existence.⁶

3. Chând. Up. VI. 8.4.

4. Ibid. I. 9.1.

5. Tait. Up. II. 7.

6. Īśā. Up. I 2. 1-2.

The Chāndogya-upanishad likewise emphasises that in the beginning Not-Being alone existed. Not-Being was changed into Being; Being became an egg of which were born the heaven and the earth.⁷ But the same Upanishad says in a different passage that at the beginning of all things what existed was Being. Being determined to become many, and produced fire which produced water, which again produced the earth.⁸ Again, there is the conception of Prāṇa, as the ground of all things. Prāṇa is the life principle of the Universe and cosmic force, the ultimate substratum of all things, as Upanishad Chakrogyana calls it in the Chāndogya-upanishad.⁹

It is evident that all these theories do not presuppose the existence of the Creator with a personal existence for the purpose of creation. But there are theories which take account of the personal element in creation. In the Prasāna-upanishad Pippalada asserts that the Creator became desirous of creating and practised penance. He then created a pair of Kūyi and Prāṇa, corresponding to matter and spirit with a view to creating all existence from them.¹⁰ This notion of a duality of primary existence is akin to Aristotle's conception of Matter and Form.

7. Chānd. Up. III. 10. 1-3.

8. Ibid. VI. 4. 1-4.

9. Ibid. I. 11.5.

10. Prasāna Up. I. 3-13.

The Taïttiriyaupaniṣad tells us that the Creator practised penance and created all things. After creating them He entered into them so that He became both the manifest and the unmanifest, the defined and the undefined, the conscious and the unconscious. "According to the Iṣhadāraṇyakaupaniṣad what existed in the beginning of all existence was the Ātman. The Ātman wished for a second and divided himself into two halves, man and woman, thus giving rise to the duality of sex."¹²

But the Aitareyaupaniṣad says that the Ātman created the four worlds - the supra-celestial region of waters, the heavens, the earth and the subterranean region of waters. He then created a world - Person, who is an intermediary Person subsisting between the Ātman and the universe.¹³ This Upaniṣadic conception of the intermediate entity is akin to the conception of Logos in Greek and Christian philosophy, the only difference between the two being that the Logos of the Upaniṣads is subject to the Ātman.

The Taïttiriyaupaniṣad gives an emanation theory. According to this theory Space proceeds from the Ātman, air from space, fire from air, water from fire and earth from water, all proceeding one after the other from the Ātman. This process of emanation is the Way-Down. When

11. Tait. Up. II. 6.

12. Iṣhad. Up. I. 4. 1-4.

13. Ait. Up. I. 1-3.

there is the Way-Up, through which process every element is resolved in the element preceding it, at the time of destruction, so that everything is finally absorbed in the eternal Ātman.¹⁴ The Mundakaupanisad gives the Personal-Impersonal theory of creation. What existed at the beginning of creation, was a Formless Person who was unborn and without a mind. Life, mind and senses, space, air, light, water and earth, in fact all earthly and celestial existences were born from this Primeval Person.¹⁵ In this passage from the Mundakaupanisad speaks in terms of emanation or generation rather than of creation.

The theistic theory of creation is found in the Svetāśvatarāupanisad. It says that there is an eternal Being, who is the primal cause of all existence. He who is a Creator of all things that exist, rules the world. He is the supreme God-head, the Lord of all souls and is the self-subsisting Mover who causes the whole universe to move.¹⁶

The religion of Persia does not fall short of monotheism, while its mythology and theology teach Dualism. Its theology teaches us that Ahura Mazda and Ahriman, the Lord of Wisdom and the Lord of Destructive Spirit were

14. Tait. Up. II. 1.

15. Mundaka Up. II. 1. 2-9.

16. Svet. Up. III. 2; VI. 1; VI. 9.

independent of each other. Ahura Mazda was the creator of the material world. At first, heaven was made by his word, then the waters, the land, the plants, the animals and lastly the men. But his rival spoiled the whole creation by sending demons against angels, error against truth, hatred against love and vice against virtue. Since then there has been a conflict between the two kingdoms of good and evil in the battle-field of this world.

The Greeks, however, saw everything in the light of philosophy. Instead of emphasising the personal causes acting arbitrarily they emphasised the impersonal causes acting according to law. Empedocles was the first great philosopher who traced the world to a non-material agency. His doctrine of the four elements whose movements, he said, were determined by Love and DisCORD, is an important step towards Idealism. But Anaxagoras took a far more advanced step in this direction when he said that the cause of the movement by which the world was made was Reason.

In Plato the Greek Idealism reaches its full heights. The Timaeus reflects his ideas of creation. In his poetic mood Plato gives a graphic picture of creation, and makes God the creator of the universe. In his philosophical construction, however, he identifies God with the Good. "Let me tell you, then", he observes in the Timaeus, "why the Creator created and made the universe.

He was good and desired that all things should be as like Himself as possible."¹⁷

God made the world out of a material which could not be moulded to His will. Into this material He introduced as many proportions as it could receive. This Power resisting God's will Plato calls 'Necessity'. Necessity is the cause of all evil in the world and Plato's God is subject to it, in so far as He cannot completely overcome it.

God gave a Body and a soul to the world. He imprinted certain mathematical forms and numbers on the primary matter, and out of these arose the four elements of which its body was made. The attributes of the Soul are Motion and Intelligence. It is self-moving and causes movement in other things. It is thus the cause of all growth and decay, all separation and combination and it apprehends both the ideas and the sensible realities. The universe is the image of its creator. It is related to God as son to father.

But the Neo-Platonists regard the ultimate source of being as neither matter nor spirit, but as a unity that transcends both. The key to the Divine Nature, they believe, can be found wholly in the subjective side of human experience. The material is less real than the

17. Plato : Timaeus; lii, 613, tr. by Jowett.

ideal. The intellectual cognition is the only pathway to truth and goodness. Actual contact with them is possible only by means of ecstasy, in which all distraction between subject and object is lost.

Plotinus maintains that the first Principle from which the universe is derived is the One or the Good. This One or the Good is transcendent and incognizable, hence indescribable. It is not irrational but supra-rational. The One produces the highest kind of actual Being, the Divine Mind. The ideas are immanent in the Divine Mind; they are parts of its essence, and the true objects of all thought. This Divine Mind is the subject and object of knowledge.

The Mind produces the soul, the Universal soul, as Plotinus calls it. There is a plurality of souls, the highest of these being the soul of the world. As ideas appear with the Mind, so the body appears with the soul. The soul extends itself into the corporeal just as the point when extended becomes a line.

The soul begets matter in virtue of its mobility. The form partakes of an ideal nature. Beneath it there is a substratum, which is different from it, and which might take other forms. This substratum he calls depth. But the substratum of these sensible objects is merely a shadow of the Substratum, just as their form is a shadow



of the form pertaining to the Ideas.

As against all these foregoing conceptions, Theism analyses creation as an act of God. The Old Testament, for instance, gives three types of ideas of creation. The first doctrine of creation is full of naive anthropomorphisms, representing God as breathing and walking. It is the second doctrine that teaches that Jahweh is the only God who brought all things into being by a free act of creation. This doctrine has nothing of the old creation legends, nothing of the primeval chaos, nor of a conflict between light and darkness. The third doctrine, however, teaches a dualism by emphasising that before creation, there existed a dark watery chaos, 'the Deep'.

The doctrine of creation out of nothing is not openly given in Holy Scriptures. In the New Testament we find that the sayings of Our Lord and His Apostles presuppose the Divine creation of the world. God is represented as the maker of heaven and earth, as the source of all that exists and as the Father who made the world.

It is the dogmatic conception that lays stress on the point that the world was created out of nothing, and that it was created in six days, some six thousand years ago. God is eternal and matter was not uncreated. If matter were eternal too, then it would be equal to God; it would be a second God. One must come from ^{the} other; and obviously

matter comes from God rather than God from matter. If matter were not created by God, then God would not have utilised it for creating the world, because it would not be receptive of the qualification which God intended to impose upon it. The material, out of which the world is made, must itself have a creator.

Origen asserts that creation is without beginning and end, because the substance underlying all creation is eternally created. God had created other worlds before creation of this world, and after this world comes to an end He will create other worlds. As Augustine observes, the preservation of the world is a continuous creation. God's working is eternal, says Scotus Erigena, with His Being, for creation is involved in His very essence. God precedes the world in idea rather than in time. Creation had no beginning, says Thomas Aquinas, because being the cause, God must always have effects. Furthermore, as A. C. Fraser remarks, the conception that the universe exists without a beginning and an end is not incompatible with the ideas of Theism and Providence. The existence of the world, he says, is due to the divinely natural evolution which is unbeginning and unending.

The Qurān gives the same Biblical story of creation with some modifications. It maintains that God created the universe, and that He created it out of nothing.

As regards the creation of man, it says that God created him in His own image, a conception that came down from Judaism to Christianity whence again it gained entry into Islam. In Christianity it developed into the doctrine of sonship of Christ, and in Islam it appeared in the form of Hadith. Islam thus mingles the two conceptions of creation and generation, although in general it speaks in terms of creation.

But the conception of the universe being created by God is not accepted by the Jainas and the Buddhists. The universe, they point out, was created at a particular time due to fundamental Laws of Nature, and it will be destroyed at a particular time due to fundamental Laws of Nature. God is not necessary for creation nor for its destruction. There can be no creation of things out of nothing, or of a series ^{of} accidents. They come into existence and cease to exist because of their own attributes and modes.

The Jainas and the Buddhists, thus, explain the world on the theory of the necessity of the substances to manifest themselves. For the Jainas, the universe existed from all eternity undergoing an infinite number of revolutions produced by the powers of nature. Time, Kāla, nature Svabhāva, necessity, niyati, activity, karma, and desire to be and act, niyama, are the conditions on which all the

diversities of the world are based.¹⁸ The Buddhists in the like manner assert that we need not have a conscious cause of creation at all. Man can only know how things happen. He cannot go behind the order of the world for nothing is open to him. God is not the truth of things; the truth of things is a law, which works according to its own logic. There are necessities in nature itself and no other law can be imposed upon nature from without.¹⁹ Even for Sāṅkhya the conception of God was not necessary. He was Kṛīṣṇa, even though he introduced God later in order to explain things.

Philosophy ventured to ignore, even repudiate, the orthodox doctrine of creation although there were some philosophers who were upholders of the conception. Descartes seeks to explain the origin of the world from chaos, under the laws of motion as against the biblical doctrine of creation that the world was created at a stroke. According to him the nature of the material things can be more easily conceived when they are formed gradually from elements, than when they are considered to be coming into existence at once in a perfect state. The plant, for instance, is easily conceivable simply for the reason that it develops from the seed gradually.

18. Radhakrishnan (3): Indian Philosophy; vol. I; p.330.

19. Ibid. Vol. I, p.330.

But Locke maintains that the impossibility of conceiving something that is produced at once does not limit the activity of an Infinite Mind. Man's conviction that God exists is a truth, which can be demonstrated on rational grounds. Its evidence is equal to mathematical certainty. Revelation confirms that of which we were already certain. Consequently all principles contrary to reason must be rejected as they cannot be revelation from God.

Spinoza considers that the traditional theory of creation makes the nature of God arbitrary and the existence of the world a matter of chance. He, therefore, does not accept it. There is no beginning and no end in the universe. What exists is the only one possibility and it flows from its cause in an involuntary evolution. Things proceed from God neither by creation nor by emanation. They follow from the necessary nature of God with the same mathematical necessity as the angles of a triangle are derived from the very nature of the triangle. Hence God is not transcendent creator. Consequently, Spinoza's *Natura naturans* or Nature active may be called the creator of his *Natura naturata* or Nature passive; they are co-eternal, neither preceding nor succeeding the other.

God is the free cause and He acts in accordance with the laws of His being. Nothing exists out of Him, and

His actions do not follow from external necessity. His freedom and inner necessity are identical. God never acts in view of ends, for that would make Him dependent on something external to Him. The ground of His action, for Spinoza, is the ground of His existence.

Fichte follows Spinoza and repudiates the doctrine of creation. What is God? The moral order that operates in the world and that assigns to each individual his determined place is itself God. There need not be any other God, nor do we need to conceive any other. The postulate of a particular being beyond the world order and as the cause of the world order is not at all necessary for consciousness belongs only to the individual limited ego; and as soon as we ascribe personality and consciousness to the particular being, we make it finite.

Man's cosmic view has been widened by science which has exercised a profound influence on his idea of creation. His former conception that the world was made at a certain time is replaced by the idea of a slow and progressive formation through physical forces and by the idea that many new worlds are being formed just as this world was formed long ago. Even his idea of primeval change is discarded in favour of the conviction that this universe is a cosmos, however much it may be given to change. He no more believes that the number of species



always produce forms like themselves. Instead he believes that this world which was endowed with a few forms in the beginning has been ever evolving new forms.

But as Driver points out, the cosmogony of science does not conflict with the conception of a Maker of the World either of the primitive religions or of later advanced religions. The scientific belief in a Creative Power, says Lord Kelvin, is not inconsistent with the conception of a chance concurrence of atoms.

Science also leads one to the belief in God, who is the basis of all religions. As a matter of fact, it has brought God nearer to man by emphasizing the action of an immanent Creator. Even the atomic theory of the origin of things has been set aside, as it is found that the atoms of matter are liable to break up or explode, resolving themselves into simpler forms, called electrons. These electrons are described as knots or twists or some sort of modification either static or kinetic of the ether of space. Ether may be said to be the fundamental substratum of the universe. It underlies every activity and constitutes every atom of which things are made.

The scientific idea of creation has brought to man the conception of a Mind equivalent to the Nous of Anaxagoras. This Mind underlies all existence. The whole process of evolution may be regarded as the gradual

unfolding of the Divine Thought or Logos through the action of spirit on matter. In this conception one might even get a faint glimpse of a universe higher than anything known to the senses, a universe which is capable of infinite development.

The ultimate relation between the Supreme Being and the universe is considered from three standpoints: creation, generation and emanation. Creation emphasises the distinction between God and the universe, similar to the distinction between the watchmaker and the watch, between the craftsman and the article manufactured by him. The conception of generation lays stress on the identity of nature between the generator and the generated similar to that which exists between the parents and the offspring. It implies that both the generator and the thing generated are essentially the same. In creation, on the other hand, God creates diverse things out of nothing and hence the question of essential similarity between the two does not arise at all. Emanation, however, suggests light emanating from a luminous body through a necessity of its own nature, this immanence verging to identity. In other words, creation emphasises transcendence of God, emanation His immanence, and generation combines both His transcendence and immanence.

II. Rūmī seems to be influenced by the prevalent theories of creation, which were essentially Greek in origin. In its first two centuries, when Islam was untouched by Greek thought, it was pre-occupied with fear of God. With the introduction of Greek thought the problems of the finite and the infinite of eternal and contingent engaged the attention of Muslim thinkers. As result, the conceptions of Wujūd, Existence, and Najib-al-Wujūd, Necessary existence and the like arose. The Neo-Platonic idea of emanation made entry into Islam, and Sūfism, under its influence, maintained that Universal Reason is the first thing created by God. The Qurānic idea of returning unto God was further interpreted as the going back of the soul to the Absolute Unity out of which it came. Emanation was the spontaneous bursting forth of Divine Beauty for self-manifestation.

Rūmī rejects all attempts to solve the transcendental questions by the categories of human understanding, so also the attempt to comprehend the ultimate relation between God and the universe. However, he does employ all the three conceptions, even though he regards them as mere metaphors that hint at the unintelligible relation. Being predominantly an evolutionary thinker, he tries to reconcile his evolutionary concepts with these three standpoints that are, for him, the three aspects of one and the same relation.

Rūmī believes that God is the Supreme Creator and that His creativeness is infinite. The Divine Energy overflows, and it overflows eternally. The universe is the effect of the creative word KŪF, the word of Command that springs from God whenever He wills to create anything out of nothing. God said 'Be' and there it was, or rather, as the Bible expresses it, "And God said, Let there be light; and there was light."²⁰

The Command is indivisible and unitary in nature, even though it spreads out in space and time, and takes shape in the Realm of Nature. In the words of Rūmī the word consists of two letters, but it is one and its effect is one. He compares it to a noose, which is double in form but single in meaning; and says quite in the spirit of Qur'ān, that both the Command and the creation belong to God.

"The Divine Command KŪF (Be) was a single act, and the two letters K and F occurred only in speech while the inward meaning was pure (uncompounded). When the Divine Command comes — "Enter into forms" — they enter into them; likewise at His Command they become divested of form. Know, therefore, that (in the text) to Him belongs the creation and to Him the Command, "the creation" is the form and

20. The Bible: The Old Testament; Genesis; 3,4; p.1.

"the Command" is the spirit riding upon it."²¹

The Universe is created and not eternal. One who thinks that it is eternal is like the idle spider which does not know that the house in which it dwells was built at some time in the past or like the gnat which thinks that the garden in which it lives is eternal, or like the worm which thinks that the wood in which it is imprisoned is eternal.

The universe is created and it is created by God on account of need. He created the earth because it is needed by man, mountains because they are needed by the earth and the sun, the moon, and the stars, in fact everything in proportion to the need. The universe displays the Treasury of God hidden in itself; and everything in it, the winters and summers, the winds and clouds, and the heavenly spheres, all help it in its mission.

21. The Mathnavi. Vol. I; 3100; Vol. VI; 77-78.

امرکن یک نعل بود و لذت و کاف :- در سنی انشاء و معنی بود صاف
 امرآید در مورد رو در رود :- باز هم ز امرش مردی شود
 پس بے الخلق و بے الامرش بدان :- خلق صورت امرجان را کتب بک

" Because without need the Almighty God does not give anything to anyone."²²

One might object that if the universe was brought into being at a specific point in time, then we do not understand what stimulated God to create a universe so late in time. Again, if this creation is a good then God must have been content with a lesser good, either because His skill was inadequate to its achievement or because He did not want to exercise His will. These views are not consistent with the Divine Nature. In other words there is no reason why creation could become operative at a point in time and not become operative in the beginning.

Here there is a fallacy in the use of the notion of time. Time is considered to be an empty form lying between the universe as possible and the universe as actual. The notion of a beginning presupposes a time order already existing before the universe, while time, as we have seen, is a conceptual form of order, posterior to it. God is prior to the universe in a logical sense, and not in a temporal sense. The whole process of creation is but a single timeless moment of Divine self-manifestation. It is only a fleeting moment in the life of God. As a scholar-

22. Ibid. Vol. II; 3274.

ترانک ب حاکم خداوند عزیر: ی بنمشد سچ کسی را صبح چیز



mecher points out the conception that God's creative activity had a beginning makes Him a temporal Being in the realm of change. The work of God as the Creator is identical with His work as the preserver.

Hegel gives a similar conception. God is the creator, because it is His Essence to be a Creator. If He is not a Creator, He would be imperfect. Creation belongs to Him as an eternal moment or determination and it was not undertaken in time. God is the eternal creator, this eternal self-revelation being His notion, or definition.

John Caird identifies creation with God's self-manifestation which he regards as an eternally necessary moral act. The spirit or mind contains in itself the necessity of self-manifestation in objective form, and this necessity constitutes the very essence of the mind. Creation, therefore, is of the very nature and being of God and is far from being the expression of an arbitrary will.

Green expressed the same idea when he says that the world is as necessary to God as God is to the world. The will to create, says Lotze, is a predicate of God. It is an absolutely eternal predicate of God. Creation, therefore, does not mean a deed of God. Lipsius observes that creation is not a single act lying in the past. The idea

of creation should be regarded as without beginning or end.

God is not limited by anything outside Himself in His creative act of will. When He wills, He gives being to the content of His will. He is the ground both of what He knows and what He wills. To use Fūmī's words, God's will is His pleasure; there is no past and no future in His action, because there is neither born nor one with Him. As the Theologia Germanica reveals, it is the property of Will to will something. God has created the universe in order that His will be put in exercise. The hidden will becomes manifest, says Jacob Boehme, in creation; without creation it would remain unmanifested and unconscious. God says in the Gītā:

" I am the source of all creation; everything in the world moves because of Me; know thus the wise, full of devotion, worship Me."²³

" When (on the contrary) you are told that whatever God wills shall come to pass, and that to Him belongs the authority absolute and everlasting."²⁴

23. The Bhagavadgītā; Ch. X; v.3.

24. The Mathnawi. Vol. V; 3115.

چون بگویند ای شی خدای تعالی : حکم من مطلق باودان



In creating, therefore, God does not act on something already given, nor does He originate matter as something external to Himself. The universe does not confront Him as 'other' as it confronts the finite self in spatial relation with it. Creation is the unfoldment of God's own inner possibilities which are boundless, and in giving substance to the content of His Will God does not require the mediation of any external order of things. As such, the universe which is the object of His Will is in living relation to Him and depends on Him. It has no being apart from God. Being the habitual mode of Divine activity, it is organic to the life of God; and is an organic whole possessing an uniform mode of behaviour.

The Divine Nature is a living unity containing potencies within itself. The universe is the objectification and concrete manifestation of ideas in God's mind, just as houses are the objectification of the ideas in the architect's mind. It is a form and not an essence which only exists as a concept and not as a form. As soon as God willed it, says Rūmī, all objects of potential existence came into actual being; and the nature and destinies of these fixed essences accompanied them to their materialised form and also to their future state. The ceaseless activity in the universe is the manifestation of the Divine consciousness.

The Gītā gives a similar conception. God created the world from His Own being. All beings existed in a subtle state in God in the pralaya condition of the world.²⁵ They are cut off from one another only in the manifested state. All antagonisms, all differentiations, are due to prakṛiti which is God's lower nature. Hence God is the body and the heart of the universe. He is He who maintains all existences in relation to one another.

"Arjuna, know that all beings have evolved from this two-fold Prakṛiti, and that I am the source of the entire creation, and in Me again it dissolves."²⁶

And Rūmī says:

"Every moment there is coming from Him the call, 'I'm not I your Lord?' and substance and accidents are becoming existent. At the answer 'Yes' is not coming from them, yet their coming from non-existence into existence is equivalent to 'Yes'."²⁷

Creation, therefore is the process of differentiation. It is the process of devolution, *tanazzul*, and

25. Radhakrishnan : Indian Philosophy, Vol. II, p. 348.

26. The Bhagavadgītā: Ch. VII.v.6.

27. The Mathnawi. Vol. I; 2110-2111.

برای از وی می آید نیست .: جوهر و اعراضی گردند نیست
گویی آید بلی زیشان ولی .: آینه نشان از عدم باشد بلی

individualisation, ta'ayyūn, whereby the Divine Essence manifests itself in the form of the universes. The Universal Intellect and the Universal Soul are its immediate emanations of which the two worlds are only reflections. The world is one thought descending from the Universal Intellect; it is the outward form of the Universal Intellect, which is its life and which rules it as spirit rules the body. However, the Divine Spirit embraces the powers of the Universal Intellect and the Universal Soul, which are at times revealed and at times hidden under foam of the material world, just as the foam over the waves of the sea conceals the vision of the waves, but disclosing them sometimes by moving away from them.

A similar conception is given by Philo, who distinguishes between God in Himself and God revealed. God is pure being, incomprehensible. Yet he is immanent in the universes and in man, as he is all penetrating and all pervading. The universe is filled with divine presences which are the attributes and self-revelations of God. At the head of these is the Logos, the principle of Unity.

" This world is one thought emanating from the Universal Intellect, the Intellect is like a king and the ideas are his envoys. The whole world is the form of Universal Reason which is the father of whosoever



is a follower of the Divine word."²⁸

From its existence is the knowledge of God the universe receives the objectivity of the existence in concrete. The unseen fixed spiritual essences in God's knowledge emerge into externality in this process of emanation. Rūmī calls this the separation of the parts from the whole.

"What is the cause of the part's keeping aloof from its whole? What is the cause of all this mixture with that which is diverse? Behold how the genus hath become species in the process of differentiation: behold how the unseen things have become visible in emanation. When He recites spells over the non-existences which have no eye or ear, they begin to stir."²⁹

Khallāj talks of this process of devolution, the descent of God from the State of Pure unmanifested essence to the state of manifestation. There are, according to

28. Ibid. Vol. II; 978; Vol. IV; 3259.

ابن جبران یک فکر است از عقل کل: عقل چون شامست و صورتی را سل
کل عالم مدور عقل کل است: کدست بابای مرا آنکه اهل دل است

29. Ibid. Vol. II; 2581-82; Vol. I; 1448.

جز و را از کل خود بر صیقل چیت: با مخالفه این صیقل آمیز چیت
جنس را بین نوع گشته در روش: فیما بین عین گشته در روش
بر عهده محاسن ندارد چشم و گوش: چون مدون خواند علی آید بخوش

him, three stages in the life of God — the stage of Pure Being or Essence devoid of all attributes and names, the stage wherein there is the appearance of attributes and names through the manifestation of the Essence; and the stage wherein there is the appearance of man through the projection of His own Essence. Plotinus calls the Simple Essence apart from all qualities and relations the darkness, *al-ʿaḥḍ*. He says that this simple Essence passes through three stages which modify its purity and simplicity. The first stage is *un-nas*, *ʿaḥḍiyat*, the second stage is *be-zoon*, *ʿaḥḍiyat* and the third stage is *l-nas*, *ʿaḥḍiyat*. Through this process of descent the Absolute develops consciousness and becomes the subject and object of all thought. It is revealed as divinity with distinctive attributes, embracing the whole series of existence. Hence every appearance displays some or other attribute of Reality.

Plotinus admits that God possesses different degrees in Himself even though He is One. In the first stage He is the unmanifested and unconditioned without relations and limitations, hence unknowable. In the second stage He displays Himself to Himself. This is the First Emanation or Universal Reason, a pure unity and potentiality. The third stage contains all the active and efficient manifestations of the Absolute. This is the second emanation



or Universal Soul containing all particular souls. The next stage is the manifestation of this stage. The fifth stage includes all the passive manifestations; and the last one is the manifestation of the above one. This is the stage of the sensible world. As is found in Gita:

"Earth, water, fire, air, ether, mind, reason and also the ego — these constitute the nature of Brahman, eight-fold divided; — His lower nature. His higher nature is in the form of the Jīva, the life-principle by which the whole universe is sustained."³⁰

God's motive in manifesting the universe was that His knowledge should be revealed. The Divine Nature is a living Unity containing potencies within itself. Creation is the passing forth of these potencies into existence, for God was a hidden treasure which burst forth into heaven and earth because of its fullness.

"I was a hidden treasure; because of its fullness it burst forth and made the earth more shining than the heavens."³¹

This desire to manifest His subjective knowledge is realised through the principle of objective realisation.

30. The Bhagavadgītā. Ch. VII; 4,5.

31. The Mathnavi. Vol. I; 2862.

گنج مخفی بہ ریزی پاک کرد : تاکہ را تا باں تر از انماک کرد



The fruits are in being before they become manifest. The phenomenal world has come into existence from the other world, the world of *ayān-e-sābitā*, the fixed essences in God's knowledge. It is the result of God's thought just as the house is the story of the thought in the architect's mind.

"The King said, 'The wisdom of God in making the world manifest was that the thing known should come forth to be seen plainly. The beginning, which is thought, comes to an end in action; know that in such wise was the construction of the world in eternity.'²²

In other words, Creation is God's knowing Himself. In knowing Himself God knows all things that are in Himself. As such, He is knowledge, knower and known at the same time. Some might object that creation by God for self-revelation would imply a want which shows that God is not perfect. But self-revelation does not affect the perfection of the extent of knowledge of God. Therefore, such a criticism would not be valid.

There is nothing in the not-being that God does not bring into existence. Not-being is perpetually

²² Ibid. Vol. II; 994; 970.

گفت شمس مکت در انظار جهان : آنکه دانسته برون آید میان
آل نکر آفریده در ملک : نسبت عالم جهان دان در اول



being actualized and clothed with Divine attributes, so that God's Perfection is displayed ceaselessly. To use Rūmī's words, "There is no seed that is not in this barn, except the Divine Beauty which hath no equal."³³

In other words, everything in the universe manifests God, the universe being a theatre for the manifestation of the Divine Names and Attributes. However, this manifestation involves the appearance of contrariety; conflict between good and evil, faith and infidelity and the like. But these oppositions, being the reflections of God's attributes of Beauty and Majesty, Mercy and Wrath, have their source in God Himself. The righteous and the wicked are the vessels of His mercy and the vessels of His wrath, so that even Pharaoh's actions are not in disagreement with God's fore-knowledge of Him. There was never any opposition between him and God, even though there was opposition between him and Moses who also represents the Divine Command. To use Rūmī's words, both Moses and Pharaoh are in God's being. They descend to the world of plurality as two irreconcilable adversaries, only to return to the Eternal Fountain of Unity where they are destined to abide in peace with each other.

33. Ibid. Vol. I; 3196.

نیست نمی‌کند بر این انبار نیست :: غیر صیغه مذکر از انبار نیست

That God is the essence of all existents can be realized in the mystical experience of the Perfect Man, who alone represents Divine Unity. There is nothing incongruous in the universe, for everything corresponds perfectly to the essential character of everything else. All opposition is apparent. There is the maintenance of equilibrium in the world order as Universal Mercy prevails over all opposition.

There is another world beyond the world of matter. It is the spiritual world. The spiritual world is a subtle world. It is subtle, delicate and invisible, so that it must come in contact with something material in order to become visible. Beyond the world of matter is its location, neither inside it nor outside of it, neither beneath it nor above it, neither joined with it nor separate from it. It has no quality and no relation and yet it manifests every moment innumerable signs of itself in the material world.³⁴ And what is the relation of this world to the material world? Rumi says, it is a very subtle relation like the relation of manual skill to the form of hand, like the relation of glances of the eye to the form of the eye, or of eloquence to the form of tongue.

The sensible world is the shadow or reflection of the ideal world. If it seems real it is due to the sleep

34. Ibid. Vol. V, v, 2786 (Reading).



of ignorance that has captured the hearts of men. That they perceive is nothing but the materialized images of the dream-world, the world whence fantasies march in perpetual succession. Not knowing whence they come, the heart passes from one realm of fantasy into another till all consciousness of reality is lost.

Phenomena are contingent existences deriving their being from God, the Absolute Being. Every sensible object has a spirit which constitutes its form and in relation to this form the spirit is as significant as meaning is to the word. The material world subsists through the spiritual world which forms its essence. The abode of the Moon and the stars is not the changing water but the regions of expansive Heaven. The Divine attributes likewise, dwell in the sphere of realities, the sun of pictured forms in the world of created things being a mere reflection in the river-water. They are there because they are viewed from the aspect of separation. Otherwise all is naught except the world of spirit in which every particle is living, speaking and hearing, everything having assumed the Divine attributes of purity and loveliness. This is the world beyond all change and decay, a world that brings the dead to life, a spiritual salt-mine, as Pūṇi calls it, ever pure and ever purifying.

"Lo, it is a world apparently non-existent"

but essentially existent, while that other world is apparently existent but has no permanence.³⁵

This view of Rūmī is similar to Ghazzālī's classification of three worlds — *Ālam-i-malakūt*, the spiritual, invisible world, *Ālam-i-Jabarūt*, the world partaking of both the eternal and the temporal and *Ālam-i-'ālm* and *Shahādā*, the material and phenomenal world.³⁶ Both the spiritual *Ālam-i-'ālm* as well as the world of creation *Ālam-i-khalq*, belong to God. All that is material is given to locality and dimension and is of no account. Only the world of *ālm* has real existence, the material world being significant only as form to the spirit and as darkness to light. The spiritual world is the sphere of the human soul.³⁷

Thomas Campanella traces the descent of the material world from the ideal world. The ideal or archetypal world first comes from God.³⁸ From the ideal world proceeds the metaphysical world of eternal intelligences — of the angels, the world-soul, human spirits — whence

35. Ibid. Vol. I; 725.

یک جهان نیست شکل مست ذات : وان جهان مت شکل بی ثبات

36. Smith (Fargaret): *Al-Ghazzālī, the Mystic*, p. 213.

37. Ibid. p. 174.

38. Folckenberg : *History of Philosophy*; p. 38.

proceeds the mathematical world of space. Then comes the temporal or corporeal world, and lastly the empirical world of space and time. Consequently the empirical world is far from being the natural home of any existing thing.

Similarly Patroclus recognises three worlds, the elemental or territorial, the astral or celestial and the spiritual or divine.³⁹ Corresponding to these three worlds there are in man, his body, his spirit and his immortal soul. The body nourishes itself on the elements, the spirit from the spirits of the stars and the immortal soul from faith in Jesus. All things were originally intermingled in a unity, *prima materia*, created by God. From it the manifold proceeded by separation with its various forms and colours.

Jacob Boehme believes in an invisible, immaterial and eternal world behind the world of matter. He calls it the mother of the world of matter because it is the unoriginate substance that differentiates into Divine Personality within, and into the material world, life and consciousness without. Through the latter is revealed the principle of light and darkness in temporal forms, the light or love principle being manifested in the incarnation of Christ. Consequently, only those that are united with his life and live in his life are seized by a new birth into his spirit

³⁹. Ibid. p. 28.

and are ultimately saved. And what is salvation? Salvation is the life of God in a personal conscious expression in the life of man.

Rūmī, therefore maintains that man's denial of the spiritual world is a false denial because his life itself is an argument against his denial.⁴⁰ It is similar to the denial of embryo of any possibility of a higher state of existence, before its own ascent from nonexistence to existence. But the denial of man is far more ridiculous than that of the embryo because the embryo is devoid of rational and spiritual faculties, while man is endowed with these faculties. The embryo denied the present life before it was born, and man denies the life beyond before his death. So death alone shall disprove his denial, deliver him from darkness and falsehood and show that his denial is nothing but his affirmation. He has become forgetful of the past, but he shall have to bring himself back to wakefulness however much he may regard his dream to be really enduring.

Phenomena are the shadows of their archetypes in the Ideal World, from which they derive their partial existence. They are the samples of the other world to which they ultimately return and cease to be as visible as

40. The Mathnawi, Vol. IV; 891-901.

soon as they return to that subtle world. They are the samples because the Divine Essence pervades the finite objects and because the original along is everlasting.

In other words, the world of matter is the medium through which the Ideal World becomes visible, just as the spring breeze becomes visible through the medium of the trees and the rose-beds. The hidden qualities of the Ideal World become manifest through the outward medium of the being of man. Even his happiness and sorrow are the token from the spaceless world.

" Every form you see has its archetype in the
placeless world;

If the form perished, no matter, since its
original is everlasting.

Every fair shape you have seen, every deep saying
you have heard,

Be not cast down that it perished; for that is
not so.

Whereas the spring-bead is undying, its branch
gives water continually;

Since neither can cease, why are you lamenting?"⁴¹

41. Nicholson (F.A.): Selected Poems from the Divān-i-Shams-i-Jehrīz. XII; 1-2.

معرفتش را که دیدی جنبش ز لامکانست
گرفتیش نعم نیست و ملش چو جادو است
بر صورتی که دیدی مرگه که شنیدی
بدل مشو که رفت آن زیر آن چنانست
چون امل چشمه باقیست فرغش همیشه باقیست
چون هر دوی زوالند از چه ترا فغانست

The similarity of this conception with Plato's conception of the relation of Ideas to the sensible objects is very striking. Plato's theory of Ideas might have been the source of this conception of Rūai. The Ideas, for Plato, are the ground of the sense objects, the sense objects participating in the Ideas. They gain their being from the Ideas which are the absolute reality by which they are explained. They are the copies of the Ideas, and they are real only in so far as they resemble the Ideas, but unreal in so far as they differ from them. The Ideas are, thus, both transcendent and immanent, — transcendent because they possess a reality of their own part from the sense objects and immanent because they participate in them.

" This world is finite, and truly that other is infinite : image and form are a barrier to that Reality. Know that the next world, in respect of ownership is like flocks of camels : the present world is its corollary like the camel's hair and dung." ⁴²

The earthly melodies that delight the human soul are but the echoes of the heavenly music. They recall to man the gardens of paradise and the soul's peaceful life

42. The Mathnawi. Vol. I; 526; Vol. IV; 3142.

این جهان محدود آن خود بیحد است : نقش و صورت پیش آن معنی سیرت
آن مرت قطار اشتداد ملک : در تیغ دنیا شش همچون چشم و بشک

there in pre-existence. Samā, the whirling dance introduced by Rūmī himself, is the bestower of peace and tranquility to the human soul, as it is also the representation of the circling heavenly bodies impelled to move by love. It fills the soul with love and longing to fly to its original home.

"Dance philosophers have said that we received those harmonies from the revolution of the celestial sphere. Although the water and earth of our bodies have caused a doubt to fall upon us, something of those melodies comes back to our memory. Therefore samā (music) is the lord of lovers (of God), since therein is the phantasy of composure and tranquility of mind."⁴³

Ghazzālī gives a similar conception. Music, for him, has a cosmic significance. Earthly music is nothing but an echo of the heavenly music. The soul responds to music in this life, because it is reminded of melodies heard long before in pre-existence, when it listened to the sweet

43. Ibid. Vol. IV; 733, 737 & 742.

پس حکیمان گفتند اندر این لحظه : از دوار چرخ بگرفتیم ما
 گریه برآوردیم آب و گل شکی : یارمان آمد از آنجا چیرگی
 پس غمناک شدیم آمد سماع : که درو باشد خیال اجتماع

melody of the spheres. It remembers and it longs to be reunited with its source.

Therefore listening to music is the listening of the soul to God as He is revealed in music. Its power arouses in the soul longing for God, stimulates its activity and strengthens it for contemplation. It leads to purification and results in revelation by producing 'states' in which God reveals Himself. There is the relationship, eternal and divine between the rhyme of music and the spirit of man just as there is the relationship between the lover and the Beloved. Music carries one to the abode of Beauty, says Abu'l-Husayn al-Darīzī, and ecstasy is nothing but an expression of what is experienced in listening to music.⁴⁴

One is here reminded of the Pythagorean conception of "the music of the Spheres" which assumed that the courses of the heavenly bodies are determined by musical harmony. Under its influence the Muslim thinkers postulated that the movement of the planets and stars caused by the revolving of the celestial spheres has musical notes glorifying God. The earthly bodies, they said, imitate the movements and harmonies of the heavenly spheres.

44. Smith (Margaret) : Al-Ghazālī, the Mystic, pp. 88-90.

But Rūmī's conception of *Samā* seems to be a new one. Other philosophers have talked of the music of the spheres, but the whirling dance of the Mevlevi Order, as representing the cosmic music, is peculiar to Rūmī. It implies the issuance of the Infinite in the finite in the sphere of music.

God is the soul, the universe is the body. He is the one unitary life that flows through the universe which subsists through Him as the body subsists through the soul. The phenomenal forms are insignificant without this Reality.

"He is like the spirit, and the world is like the body : the body receives from the spirit both good and evil. What is form in the presence of (in comparison with) reality? Very feeble. 'Is the reality of the sky that keeps it upside down (like an inverted cup).'"⁴⁵

From the Formless Spirit all forms come to light like a tiger that leaps from a jungle. They are the clouds over the moon that is concealed in the realm of colorlessness. Rūmī explains this point with his favourite analogy

45. The Mathnawi. Vol. I: 1764, 3330.

او چو جانست د جهان چون کالیه : کالیه در جان پد بردنیک و به
 پیش معنی چیست صورت می زلالت : چرخ را میخشی می دارد نگون

of light and colour. Red and green, he argues, are seen on account of light. Men see red and green and believe that only these exist. This leads them to deny the existence of light which is their source. But as soon as the sun sets they confess that light is the force that lies behind all colour. Due to its union with colours it was not perceived. The colours were the veils that obstructed man's vision of light.

"There is a way from many-colouredness to colourlessness : Colour is like the clouds, colourlessness is a moon. Whatever light and splendour you see in the clouds, know that it comes from the stars and the moon and the sun."⁴⁶

Therefore, one who believes that the universe moves on causation is blind to the Divine hand that rules all causation. The universe is a well, all phenomenal causation being the bucket-rope on a water-wheel. The rope seems to move by the wheel, while in fact it is moved by the hand that moves the wheel. Behind all the secondary causes only one spiritual cause is operative.⁴⁷

46. Ibid. Vol. I; 3476-77.

از دو صد رنگی بی رنگی رحمت : رنگ چون ابرست وی رنگی رحمت
 معراج ابر بر منو سی و تاب : آب را خردان و ماه را نتاب

47. Ibid. Vol. I. 845-46.

Rūmī therefore compares the phenomenal forms to letters traced by an artist, and says that man should not be grieved that these letters will be wiped off, for even if they perish their originals are undying. Every form is beautiful in so far as it is a copy of its Divine prototype. The created things spring from the One Soul as the rivers flow from the one fountain. All speech and sound are waves of thought that arise from the same sea of Wisdom, only to mingle with its waters again. All beautiful forms come from the same Beauty itself, only to perish and join the eternal Beauty again. The carboys falling on red and green glass assume the form and colour of the glass. As soon as the carboys are withdrawn everything becomes naught. As Shelley observes:

" Life, like a dome of many-coloured glass,
Stains the white radiance of eternity"

And Rūmī says quite in terms of Shelley:

" That which made thee amazed at the face of
the fair is the Light of the Sun (reflected)
from the three-coloured glass."⁴⁸

The Upanisadic conception is similar to this conception of Rūmī. The Prīhadaranyakaupaniṣad says that

48. Ibid., Vol. 7; 938.

آنگ کرداد در رخ فرمانت دنگ : نور خورشید است بر شیشه به رنگ

God is the Soul of Nature. He is the Antaryāmin of the universe. He lives within the universe and governs the universe from within. He is the Soul of souls and in this Supreme Soul are centred all beings, all worlds and all the individual souls, just as the spokes of a wheel are centred in the navel of a wheel."⁴⁹

Consequently, Being and Not-Being, the One and the Many are correlative terms. They are mere names for different aspects of the same Reality. The one necessitates the other, and is the necessary condition of the other. Both are essentially one, like ice and water.

" And were it not blue from mourning,
how would this region of phenomenal
existence have remained frozen like
ice? How should the objective mani-
festation of the work be cut off
from the very self of the worker?
How should any object of contingent
being pasture on (derive existence
from) aught but Absolute Being?"⁵⁰

The universe is a mirror wherein God is displayed.
It is the eye with a squint that sees duality where there

49. Banerjee (F.D) : A Constructive Survey of Upanishadic Philosophy: pp. 210 & 212.

50. The Mathnavi. Vol. I; 520; Vol. II; 1115.

در بودی او که در تغییریت : کی مردی همجوخ بن ماجیت
مین صبح ارسی صالح چون مرد : صبح صفت او بر صنی چون مرد



is only one and utterly fails to realize the illusory nature of duality. This essential Unity is regarded by Rūmī as the latter state in which all phenomenal forms, all plurality and difference are harmoniously united. The phenomenal forms melt away, he says, like snow as soon as the Divine Beauty makes its appearance. This conception of Rūmī is similar to the Indian conception of Advīta. Squint represents perversity and negligence in Indian systems of philosophy, although some Indian philosophers would not see Reality as one at all.

"Who are we? In this tangled (complex) world what thing other than He indeed both He who is single like alif? Nothing, nothing."⁵¹

God permeates that whole phenomenal existence which in His own timeless self-revelation. He is the true self of man; and He is the true self of the universe. All creatures vanish as the inscriptions vanish as soon as the cups are broken. The wine in the cups is the only real thing that lasts, for the cups have borrowed the colour of wine. The universe is a jug that has filled itself with God's Beauty and God's Wisdom everything in it being the drop of that boundless Ocean.⁵²

51. Ibid. Vol. I; 2514.

ما کسیم اندر محاب سب سبج .: چون الف او خود چه دارد، صبح صبح
52. Ibid. Vol. I. 2860-61.

کل عالم را سواد ای سر .: کدو دار علم و خوبی تا سر
قله ارد جله خوبی است .: کمانی گنجینه زهری ریزدست

Ibn'l-Arabi gives a similar conception. He regards the Divine Essence from two aspects : God as the Absolute, Pure Being or Simple Essence, without attributes and relations, and God as an Essence endowed with attributes. God alone is Sublime and His existence only is absolute while that of the created things is only relative. They are ultimately identical with Him and are nothing apart from Him.

Farid-u-Din Attār emphasises the Unity of all existence, and insists on the Unity of Being devoid of all relations. Outside of God nothing exists. Water in the boundless ocean and water in the jug is the same water. The thread is the same in spite of the multiplicity of the knots. All numbers are repetition of the number one, so also all multiplicity is the repetition of unity.

God is the only substance, says Jāmī, the only Essence and Being. He is the Truth devoid of all phenomena, all multiplicity. Viewed under the form of multiplicity, in which He displays Himself, He is the universe. Hence, the Universe is the mirror of God, revealing His Beauty and His perfection. It has no objective existence apart from Him.

All this simply means that the phenomenal existence has merely a negative reality, the reality of the shadow.

The world of plurality, says Rūnī, is a tablet of destiny on which God has inscribed some letters. It is a creature's fancy, the passing shadow on the earth of a flying bird high in the sky. Not knowing that the origin of the shadow is the bird in the air, people chase the shadow, and are deluded.

"The bird is flying on high, and its shadow is speeding on the earth, flying like a bird."⁵³

In this analogy also we find that there is a striking similarity between Rūnī's conception and that of Plato. It has been suggested by Khalifa Abdulhakim that Rūnī might have derived this analogy from Plato's parable of the cave.⁵⁴ This view appears plausible because the influence of Greek thought on the Muslim thinkers was profound.

Plato, in his parable of the cave, compares the phenomenal forms to the shadows on the wall. The prisoners fix their gaze on these shadows and hold them as realities. They believe the echo of the passing images proceeding from the wall to be the voices of the shadows themselves. "Like ourselves" said Socrates, "and they see only their own shadows, or the shadows of one another, which the fire

53. Ibid. Vol. I. 417.

منغ بر بالا پران و سایه اش : ی دو بر فاک پران منغ و ش

54. Khalifa Abdulhakim: The Metaphysics of Rūnī; p. 148.

throws on the opposite wall of the cave?"⁵⁵ Kūṇi connects these words of Socrates when he says that, when you go to sleep, in your dream you address yourself and you hear yourself. But you think someone else has addressed you, and has told you what you have heard.

In his doctrine of Māya, Sankara asserts that every thing is māya. There are, according to him, levels of reality, the phenomenal and the noumenal. The phenomenal is not real in the real sense; it is only an appearance, a shadow, that is mistaken to be real. Likewise Bradley maintains that the phenomena are unreal. There are degrees of Reality, the Highest Reality being the Absolute. From the absolute point of view the phenomena are unreal, although in their own level they are real. In the words of Kūṇi, they are the pictures in the bath house, quite unconscious of Reality as clothes are unconscious of the body.

" On the tablet of phantasy Thou
inscribest wondrous letters
— eye and profile and cheek
and mole."⁵⁶

55. Plato. The Republic; bk. VII; 515. tr. by Lowy et (P).

56. The Mathnavi. Vol. V; 314.

در فضاى لطف بر لوح ميانال : بر نوشته چشم و عارض حدود حال

It is only through the process of self-abstract-
ion that man can strip himself of limitations and contem-
plate the Essence. It is very difficult, says Plato, to
see the Idea of Good in this sensible world. The way to
it is the way to knowledge, the ascent of the soul into
the intellectual world, and one who attains to the vision
of it, is blind to the shadows, as any one ever in the
light is blind to darkness "Last of all he will be able
to see the Sun", said Socrates, "and not mere reflections
of him in the water, but he will see him in his own proper
place, and not in another; and he will contemplate him
as he is."⁵⁷

It is the flash of Divine Illumination alone that
can reveal the One as the Many and Many as the One. In
the process of the overflowing of the One, and the One
and the Many are related to each other as the inward and
the outward aspects of one and the same being. Being the
objectifications of the Divine Attributes, the Many are
modes and aspects of the One from which they all originate.

" The One is He who hath no consort
and no tool; in number there is
doubt, and that One is beyond
doubt. Those who say 'two' or
'three' or more than three numbers

57. Plato. The Republic. Bk. VII; 516 tr. by Cowley (P)

are certainly agreed in affirming the existence of the One. Sometimes it is named 'tree' sometimes 'sun'; sometimes it is named 'sea', sometimes 'cloud'"²⁸

The relation between God and the phenomenal forms cannot be understood by logical analysis. However, Rumi tries to explain it by his analogy of the organism, which he himself admits, cannot be stretched too far. The terms 'whole' and 'part', 'union' and 'separation' are not applicable to any relation that exists between God and the phenomenal forms.

The relation of God who is the inward, invisible ground of being to external manifestation is like the relation between the 'whole', 'kull' and 'part', 'fi', which, however, should not be accepted in the ordinary sense of the terms. God is the One Spiritual whole; the parts are the phenomenal aspects of this indivisible Universal Reality. The part is useless when cut from the whole, just as the limb is dead and useless when severed from the body. But the spiritual whole does not suffer

50. The Mathnawi. Vol. II; 310, 311, 3671.

آنک بی جنتست دی حالت یکست : در مدد شکست و آن یک ی شکست
 آنک دو گفت و سه گفت و پیش ازین : متفق باشند در واحد یقین
 که در حقش نام شده گاه آفتاب : گاه بحرش نام شده گاه سماب



defect from the loss of the part.

"If the part be covered and fall
 as-under from this (spiritual)
 whole, this is not the (kind of)
 whole that is liable to defect.
 Separation from it and conjunction
 with it are not really predicable,
 the defective thing has been
 mentioned only for the sake of
 comparison."⁵⁹

He also compares this relation with the relation
 of the tree to the sap. The tree indicates the presence
 of the sap; yet in respect of its essence it is far removed
 from the sap. It is, in fact, both near and far from it.

"And as for him that perceived the
 inner meaning in this outward form,
 the form is both near to the meaning
 and far from it. In regard to
 indication, they (the meaning and
 the form) are like the sap and the
 tree; but you turn to the quiddity
 they are very far removed from each
 other."⁶⁰

59. Ibid. Vol. III. 1939-40.

جبر و ازین کل گر مرد یکسو رود : این نه آن کل است که ناقص شود
 قطع و وصل ادنیایه در مثال .. چیز ناقص گفته شد: بپر مثال

60. Ibid. Vol. I; 2640-41.

و آنکه آن معنی درین صورت ندیده : صورت از معنی قریب است و بعید
 در دلالت همجداً اند و در وقت : چون ما صیغه روی دور نشد است

The purpose of these external manifestations is to indicate that which is hidden. They are not parts of a whole because, although they are Many each attribute is essentially identical with every other and with the One. They are the particular modes and individualisations of the Absolute. Man displays these various attributes and aspects of the Divine Essence which are opposed to each other.

Their relation to God, therefore, is not like the relation of the rose's scent to the rose or nightingale's song to the nightingale, which are the parts of the rose and the nightingale. It is the relation of the beauty of all flowers and the songs of all birds to the rose and nightingale, in so far as they are the types of the Absolute Beauty which is the essence of all that is beautiful.

"The parts of the Whole are not parts in relation to the whole — (they are) not like the scent of the rose, which is a part of the rose. The beauty of all green herbs is a part of the Rose's beauty, the coo of the turtle dove is a part of that nightingale."

61. Ibid. Vol. I : 2905-6.

خزده گل نی خرد ما بسبب بگل :: نی چون چو گل که باشد جزو گل
 زلف بهره مرده لطف گل برد :: باغ قمری خرویات بیل برد

The universe is a growing universe. It is not static. It is an organic unity in which the infinite series of individualisations is one eternal and everlasting unveiling of God. There is an incessant construction and recreation of phenomenal forms at every instant in the process of manifestation of Divine Energy. Sri Lanka likens this efflux and reflux of the phenomenal form to the efflux and reflux of the sea, by which the froth is thrown and drawn back again into itself. These froths, he says, are the foam on the Pure Sea of soul. The foam rests only for a while on the sea, for it is destined to become water again and intermingles with the Sea of Unity. The generation of all things is through change. Everything that exists is the seed of that which shall come out of it, as it is the very nature of the universe to change the things that exist and make new ones of the same or different pattern. Everything is a cause and an effect, essence and form at the same time. The process of existence is constituted by these two aspects of Reality. From every cause an effect is born, from which again new effects come into being.

" The rushing and tossing of the straws in the water is produced by the water when it is agitated. When the Sea of Reality wishes to make the straws cease from struggling, it casts the

straws towards the shore."⁶²

Thus, change is the universal rule. The universe is perpetually annihilated and recreated. Every moment it is destroyed and instantaneously the like of it takes its place, for God's attributes never cease to be displayed. Life is every pouring in afresh even though we are unaware of it's perpetual renewal. Rumi says that it appears to be continuous owing to its swiftness, like a spark that appears to be a circle when whirled swiftly. Time and duration are produced by the swiftness of Divine action. Everything is in flux, and as Heraclitus puts it, one enters the same river in which ever fresh waters flow.

"Life is ever-arriving anew, like the straw; from its swiftness it appears continuous, like the spark which thou whirlest rapidly with thy hand; the swift motion produced by the action of God presents duration (Time)."⁶³

62. Ibid. Vol. I; 3340-41.

حلمها در قفس فاشاک اندرابه :: صمد ز آب آمد لوقت اضطراب
چونکه کن فوایدش کرد از سرا :: سوسه ساحل انگذ فاشاک را

63. Ibid. 1145-1146.

عمر همچون فوی لذوی رسد :: مستمیری غایه در حد
آن ز تیزی مستمر کل آمدست :: چون شرکشی تیرجهانی بیت
شاخ آتش را محسبانی بسیار :: در نظر آتش غایه بی دراز
ای درازی مدت از تیزی منع :: بی غایه سرعت انگیزی منع

"Every moment the world is renewed and we are unaware of its being renewed whilst it remains (the same in appearance)."⁶⁴

Iqbāl gives a similar conception. The universe, he says, is of a free creative character, of the nature of life. It is free, creative and original, an organic unity of thought, will and purpose. Whitehead likewise admits that the universe is not a static substance, but an organism. Its nature is that of the self, for it is life, always in constant flux and change, in action and movement. This contention is confirmed by modern physics which maintains that nature of an atom is electricity rather than something electrified.

Man also is at strife with himself, as he displays the various attributes and aspects of the Divine essence, which are opposed to each other. He is in constant flux with his succession of states, each containing within itself that which precedes it, and precluding what which follows it. But all these states extend into each other in such a way that the change is imperceptible. Bergson calls this change without succession "Duration", and

64. Ibid. Vol. I. 1144.

Rūmī says:

"Every instant, then, thou art dying
and returning: Mustafa declared that
this world but a moment."⁶⁵

Modern science has confirmed this thesis of Rūmī also. It has proved that there is a constant creation and destruction of the cells in the human body, so much so that after a time man becomes endowed with completely a new body with no trace of the old. This creation and destruction is so rapid and interconnected that the change is indiscernible.

In the Ocean of Reality the forms of phenomenal existence rise, like waves, in succession, and disappear the next moment like bowls that sink as soon as they are filled with water. These bowls, says Rūmī, are constantly being filled and emptied with draughts of the Ideal World. The bowls are ignorant of the source from which they gain these draughts. Only the Perfect Man finds the ocean of Reality that is hidden behind them. From the world of phenomena he judges the glory of the spirit, by which the universe is constantly created, perished and renewed.

65. Ibid. Vol. I; 1142.

بِسْ تَرَاهِ لِعَظَمَتِ رُكِّ دَرْجَتِیست .: مَصْطَفٰی فَرمود دُنْیَا سَاعِتِیست

"Nay we are pearls in that sea, therein
we all abide; Else why does wave follow
wave from the sea of soul?"⁶⁶

The whole universe is drunken with the wine of
God's love which impels it ceaselessly to seek Him alone.
The elements, the mineral, vegetable and animal worlds,
the terrestrial and celestial spheres, all suffer grief
and pain in separation from Him, and are consumed by His
burning passion. In the words of Rūmī, the gardens that
flourish are laid bare; the mountains are shattered to
pieces; the sea is ever in agitation, and the sun, the
moon and the stars that shine in heaven sink desperately
in their attempt to find Him.

" By the command of God air becomes
fire : both are drunken with the
wine of God."⁶⁷

All the things in the universe are lovers of one
another. Each and every particle is attracted by every
other particle as iron is attracted by magnet. Even the

66. Nicholson (R.A) : Selected Poems from the Divān-i-Shams i-Tabriz. II.11.

نکه بدریادیم جلد او خافیم : ورنه ز دریای جان موج بیاپی میرفت

67. The Mathnawi. Vol. I. 351.

باد تشنه می شود از امر حق : مرد مرست آمد از غم حق

four elements in the human body are attracted by their congeners outside the human constitution, and are constantly dragged towards them. But Divine Providence keeps them together for a particular period, so that the human body remains in health. As soon as they abandon each other, and return to their congeners the body dies. Likewise, the soul in the body too is a stranger, constantly attracted by the world of spirit to which it belongs. Death releases from this prison. Rūmī, therefore, says, that life is the harmony of contraries, water, earth, fire and air; death is that harmony broken. He writes:

" Life is the peace (harmony) of
contraries, death is the fact
that war arose between them."⁶⁸

This relation between lover and beloved that exists in the universe also serves the Divine purpose of self-manifestation. Love permeates the whole universe. Without it the universe would remain a frozen and inanimate thing. Impelled by this force along all the things sacrifice themselves for better. Everything is in love with everything else, because everything is in love with Perfection, and is proceeding towards Perfection.

68. Ibid. Vol. I. 1293.

زندگای آشتی ضد محاسن :: مرگ آن که در میان شان جنگ است

"The Wisdom of God in destiny and in decree made us lovers of one another. Know that the wheeling heavens are turned by waves of Love : were it not for Love, the world would be frozen (inanimate). Every note is in love with that Perfection and hastening upward like a sapling."⁶⁹

III. Man is the crown of creation. Being the first in the process of divine thought, he is the origin and final cause of creation. The universe is brought into existence for his sake in spite of the fact that he appears the last in creation. The branch appears to be the origin of the fruit, while in fact the branch has come into existence for the sake of the fruit. The tree is born of the fruit, although in appearance the fruit is born of the tree. Similarly, the first thought in the Divine Mind, man, is eternal although it comes last into actuality.

"If in appearance I am born of Adam,
in reality I am the forefather of
every forefather. For this reason

69. Ibid. Vol. III; 4400; Vol. V; 3854. 3858.

حکمت حق در قضا و قدر : که در مالا عاشقان صمدگر
دور مرد دهازمیج عشق دهن : که بر بودی عشق ببردی میان
بزه دره عاشقان کمال : که می شتاد در علو همچون نال

that master of all sorts of knowledge
has uttered the allegorical saying.
'We are the last and the foremost.'⁷⁰

The Divine consciousness is the very ground of man's nature. Adam was created in God's own image. He is the mirror wherein God sees Himself, for in him there is the ceaseless manifestation of the Divine consciousness. Therefore, even though a microcosm in form he is a macrocosm in reality uniting in himself all the Divine Attributes. God realises Himself in human nature, becomes conscious of Himself in human nature, and returns to Himself through human nature. God and man are united in the Perfect Man for it is through the initiative experience of the soul that God returns from the sphere of manifestation to the Unmanifested Essence.

"Therefore in form thou art the
microcosm, therefore in reality
thou art the macrocosm"⁷¹

70. Ibid. Vol. IV; 526-27.

پس این مرده است آن ذوقش: رمز نجی آل حردن السانند
گر بسودت رخ رادم راده ام ندی بمعنی تجدید افتاده ام

71. Ibid. Vol. IV; 521.

پس بسودت عالم اصغر ندی: پس بمعنی عالم اکبر ندی

Hence, an Ibn 'l-Arabi says, man is the only perfect and complete manifestation of God. No further creation is possible nor necessary after him. "We ourselves are the attributes by which we describe God" he says, "our existence is merely an objectification of His existence. God is necessary to us in order that we may exist, while we are necessary to Him, in order that He may be manifested to Himself." Man is the microcosm, observes Jīlī, in whom all the Divine Attributes are fully and finally displayed. In him alone God becomes conscious of Himself in all His diverse aspects. 'Allāz repeats those words when he says, the purpose of creation is that God wanted to behold Himself as an external object and share His own Essence with another. He brought forth an image of Himself, endowed with all His Attributes and Names. Adam is the Divine image, in whom and by whom God is made manifest.

Humī therefore calls man the astroble of God. The astronomer knows the conditions of the celestial spheres and their movements. Man likewise beholds the manifestation of God through his own existence. Endowed with the gift of self knowledge he is the Divine mirror wherein the Divine Beauty is displayed. Man has the knowledge of God through his own being. Adam possessed the knowledge of the Divine Names and Attributes which God taught him. His knowledge

is, therefore, identical with the knowledge of God and is limited only by individualization. Consequently, we see all things in their essential nature.

"The father of mankind, who is the lord of
He (God) taught (Adam) the Names, hath
hundreds of thousands of sciences in
every vein. To his soul accrued know-
ledge of the name of every thing, even
as that thing exists in its real nature
unto the end of the world"⁷²

All knowledge — all sciences, arts and crafts — are learnt from Perfect Man. Those who discover something new are the organs of the universal Mind and hence the ultimate source of knowledge. The particular individual intellects merely retain and co-ordinate the second hand material supplied by the senses and imagination. In other words, man possesses within himself all sciences, just as water contains in itself pebbles and broken shreds. But this knowledge he has forgotten owing to his connection with matter.

"The figures cut on the "spider"
(uppermost tablet) on his astro-
table are there for the sake of

72. Ibid. Vol. I, 1234-35.

بدالبشر کہ علم الہی شمایست :۔ مہراران علمی انور ہوگست
اسم بر جنہ چنان کان جز نیست :۔ تالیان جان اورا دودست

typifying the Eternal Attributes.
 In order that thou mayest know that
 the lofty heavens are the reflexion
 of the perceptive (rational) faculties
 of Man" 73

God has created three kinds of creatures. There are angels who are pure intelligence and knowledge and all worship, completely devoid of sensuality in their whole hearted love of God. Being devoid of lust, they are under no burden of obligation to struggle against any imperfection. They live by their pure nature, just as fish lives by water. The beasts, on the other hand, are all sensuality and no intelligence. Being devoid of intelligence they are also under no burden of obligation to struggle against their nature.

Then there is man, a compound of both intelligence and lust, half of whom is the angel and half the beast. Being the meeting point of these two forces -- the better elements of his corporeal nature and the pure elements of the spiritual world, he is in perpetual tumult, ever in strife with himself.

73. Ibid. Vol. VI; 3140-1935.

بر صراطی استیقتوش منکبوت :: بر ادیان اول دارد شوت
 تابدانی کما نیاسی :: صفت منکی صبرکات آدمی

Kant maintains that man is an autonomous being, the other given being the animate part and the self given being the law of Reason. Man belongs to two worlds, the world of the senses and the world of reason. As a being of the senses he is under the control of natural necessity. But as a being of reason he is not subject to anything; he is free. In so far as his actions are the result of phenomena which are empirically caused, they belong to his empirical character. But in so far as he is responsible for his moral judgment his actions belong to his intelligible character. In the conflict between reason and sense man is guided by reason. In the words of Rumi.

"The majestic God created the creatures of the world in three kinds. One class (He made) entirely reason and knowledge; that is the angel: he knoweth not but prostration in worship. Another class is devoid of knowledge. It is nothing but stable and fodder. The third is Adam's descendant, half of him is of the angel and half of him is ass."⁷⁴

⁷⁴. Ibid. Vol. IV: 1497-1502

Yet, man is superior to both the angels and the beasts, because he attains to perfection through conscious efforts and through his own choice. The angels, who are the possessors of only knowledge and no lust and anger, gain perfection without any conscious volition on their part. The beasts, on the other hand, can never attain to perfection, because they are only lust and anger. Man is different. Although endowed with carnal nature, he fights against his lower self and overcomes it. But if man's lust overcomes his intelligence, he is dragged down lower than the beasts. That he should be possessed of the capacity for transforming himself and not utilise it is a disgrace to him that makes him lowest of the low. Man's moral constitution is his own, says Kant, and it is his duty to work for the transformation of his intelligible character.

" The angel grew with knowledge, the beast
with ignorance;

Man remained in dispute between them.

Sometimes knowledge draws him to the seventh
Heaven,

Sometimes ignorance drags him down so that
(he says), 'Come what will'.⁷⁵

75. Nicholson (R.A.) : Selected Poems from the Divân-i-Shams i-Tabriz, p. 321.

مرشدت علم و پیمانه است بجل
دین بیات بدینار عمانه مردم داد
گهی بی کوشش علم سوی علیین
آیین جمل بهستی که هر چه داد باد

Therefore, Rūmī says, all men are not alike although they bear the same human shape. There are those that have faithfully followed their intelligence, and have attained to the nature of angel. They are completely delivered from sensuality and are no more in need of discipline. They are the Perfect Men who are pure light, the true lovers of God and the true beloveds of God. Then there are those who are pure anger and pure lust. Having been overcome by their carnal nature, they are reduced to the status of animals and are 'the lowest of the low' as Rūmī calls them. The rest are ever engaged in warfare. Being half spiritually alive they are perpetually struggling with their animal nature, and are not satisfied with their own lives. Only the Perfect Man can make them realise their true worth and raise them to their real status.⁷⁶ The Indian conception of Jīvan Mukta is similar to this conception of Rūmī. Jīvan-Mukta is akin to the Perfect Man of Rūmī in this life.

The Jaines give a similar classification of souls on the basis of struggle for perfection. Those who have reached perfection are the Siddhajivās. They are like the Tirthankarās. Those who are capable of reaching perfection in the course of struggle are the Bhayyajivās. Then there

76. The Mathnevi. Vol. IV; 1506, 1509, 1531.



are those who cannot reach perfection in this existence; they are the Abhavyajīvēs.

But there is a fundamental difference between this conception of the Jainas and that of Rūmi. For the Jainas the struggle for perfection can be carried out only through self-effort, there being no place for Divine Grace. For Rūmi, on the other hand, nothing can be achieved without Divine Grace.

The superiority of one mind over the other is due to original Divine endowment. As against the Mutazilites, who believe that men's intellects are originally equal, the difference in them being due to the cultivation of human faculty by acquiring knowledge, he says, that the intellects differ in their original nature. All men differ from one another. One man's life is not like another man's life, nor is his death like another's death; so also his intellect, that differs from every other man's intellect.

"Therefore (a fortiori) in the case of the human essences, which are the foundation of all fundamentals, know that there too there are differences and divisions." 71

71. Ibid. Vol. II; 3022.

بس خالق را که اصل اصلاست :: "نکه آنجا فرقی و فصلیست"



However, this diversity does not affect the essential similarity of human nature. Man is the copy of his Divine archetype, wherein God's Beauty is displayed. All men are essentially the same in so far as they come from this world beyond. They differ only in their ability to recollect the other world. One man is mirror to another, says Rumi, because in one the other sees his own image.

"Thyself a true transcription art
Of the archetype Divine,
Or else a glass, wherein the King's
Own loveliness doth shine."⁷³

All creation is Not-Being reflecting the qualities of Being. From it the phenomenal world derives its transient existence which is no more substantial than a shadow, and man also is not-being in so far as he belongs to it. But all contingent being loses its negative and phenomenal character in so far as it is a manifestation of Being.

All things are nodes of the Divine Being and are, as such, endowed with life and knowledge; Hence know God through mystical relation. Man does wrong to himself by regarding himself as merely an animal that eats and drinks. He should not judge himself by his outward form, which

73. ARBERRY (A.J.) : Discourses of Rumi: p.82.

is insignificant, but by his intrinsic qualities, for an unlightened spirit is all that matters — the spirit that does not suffer loss from the outward form. In other words, he must not forget that his animal form is a mere husk of which his spirit is the kernel. In this kernel dwells Love — Love that makes him both the lover of God and the beloved of God. Consequently, in knowing himself he can know God.

"Thou in the body art an animal, and in thy spirit thou art of the angels, so that thou mayst walk on the earth and also in the sky."⁷⁹

Man is not a mere piece of flesh. His being, that is endowed with intelligence and soul, can cleave mountain and sea. He is an object of envy to the angels, for his essence is the embodiment of Divine Consciousness. It rules this piece of flesh, his body, and all its faculties, and purifies them with the Water of Divine Knowledge and through these very channels pours wisdom and love into the world. Man's first duty, therefore, is to know himself. Socrates said, 'know thyself'. Rumi echoes these words when he says that man must try to comprehend his own nature.

79. The Mathnawi, Vol. II: 3726.

تدین حیوان بجای از ملک: تادیق صم برزین صم بر ملک

so that he may judge the essential character of all things and comprehend them to his own being.

" Suppose thou knowest the definitions of all substances and accidents, how shall it profit thee? : Know the true definition of thyself, for this is indispensable."⁸⁰

Then and then only he will cease to doubt the reality of the deepest truth within himself, however much it may be veiled from himself by his egoism. He will realize that he is a fountain of Divine Wisdom, a copy of the heaven on which are written all things from eternity to everlasting. He will come to know what he was before he was created, and what he shall be after his gradual evolution.

The world is indispensable as a means of purifying the soul. Being the court of Divine Justice, it is the capital without which spiritual perfection cannot be acquired. Existence in the material world is as essential for the purification as the bath-stove with its bath for the heating of the hammer, the bath-room. Form is so far as it is associated with substance, is important, for both

⁸⁰. Ibid. Vol. V; 564.

حدیثیان و مرفی دستگیر : حد خود را دان که بدو زین گزیر

the kernel and the skin are equally important. The seed does not become tree, unless it is buried along with the husk, so also the human body which is an essential principle in accomplishing the purpose for which man is created.

The phenomenal is the bridge to the real. While passing this phenomenal bridge man needs worldly sense and speculation even though later he discards them as he no longer needs them. Therefore the physical and mental faculties of man are not created without purpose.

They raise man to his goal which is the attainment of perfect knowledge of God thus enabling him to fulfil the purpose for which he is created.

Bread leads man to the baker, the rose-garden to the gardener. The falcon that comes for food finds the king. Fire led Moses to its Creator; the enemies of Jesus raised him to the Fourth heaven. Every object of sensible and intellectual perception is an aspect of Reality. The formless One has revealed Himself in all phenomenal forms, in the sober soul and in the soulintoxicated. One who gazes upon these contemplates the Pure Essence. Therefore Rūmi says, the light of sensible eye should not be discarded too soon.

" In one he said : Do not put out
this candle of sight; for this

sight is as a candle lighting
the way to interior concentration."⁸¹

God's act of creation, thus, is an act of generosity. He has created the world in order to bestow generosity on His creatures, for being free from all purity and impurity, He Himself can receive no benefit from it. The prayers of the creatures do not purify Him; they only purify the creatures themselves. Creation is the separation of the soul from God and God has inflicted this pain of separation on the soul, in order that it knows the value of union with Him.

"The Prophet has declared that God said,
My purpose in creating was to do good.
I created to the intent that My creatures
might draw some gain from Me, and that
they might smear their hands with My honey."⁸²

Nevertheless, it is a grave mistake not to realize that the world is only a means and not an end, and to attach oneself to it considering it to be one's own

81. Ibid. Vol. I; 475.

در یکی گفت مکش این شیع را : کین تلریون شیع آمد جمع را.

82. Ibid. Vol. II; 2635-36.

گفت پیغمبر که حق فرموده اند .. قصد من از خلق اصناف مخلوقه است
آفرینم تا از من سودی کنند .. تا از شهیدم دست آلودگی کنند

permanent abode is equally extensive. Form is the merely a step in the man's ladder of progress towards his goal. It is the ship, the soul is the sailor; it is the tent, the soul is the Turkoman. Man should learn to go beyond his own form, so that he may break all the forms and be freed.

The world is wide in appearance but narrow in reality. It is a narrow bath-room in which the soul is distressed with anguish on account of its heat. But the soul cannot realise that it is in distress unless it comes out of it into open air. Sleep is a means of temporary release from this narrowness. But what the soul needs is permanent release from it. The world is to be mastered, and it is mastered by one who renounces it. Būzi, therefore, says:

"Water in the boat is the ruin of the boat, but water underneath the boat is a support."⁵³

To live in the world and yet remain independent of it is the mark of the Perfect Man. The world of phenomena is a prison in which the worldly man lives like a worm in the apple, quite ignorant of the tree and the gardener. He is the lover of the wall, on which rays of the sun strike.

53. Ibid. Vol. I, 985.

آب در کشتی مملکت کشتی است... آب اندر دیر کشتی نشینی است

Like the cavemen of Plato he has deluded himself into thinking that the splendour proceeds from the wall itself, rather than from the sun, to whom all sunbeams ultimately rejoin. The heart of the Perfect Man alone is closed against all worldly desires. Endowed with spiritual poverty he has surmounted every temptation, and lives in perfect peace with God.

" If thou seekest gold,
To this thy life is sold;
If thy greed be breed,
Be that thy soul is led.

Learn this subtlety:
Let it be known to thee,
Whate'er thy heart
Is set on; that thou art."⁶⁴

64. Arberry (A.J.) : The Rubaiyat of Jalāl-al-Dīn Rūmī, p. 15.

CHAPTER X.

PATH WAY TO GOD

I. God is the real object of all search. Union with Him is perfection. It is the attainment of the higher consciousness, the final and overwhelming experience of the Highest Being through an intimate communion with the Highest Being. In it is involved an immediate awareness of relation with God, a direct consciousness of the Divine Presence. And in the multitude of men only a few reach this end. Those fortunate few dwell at those higher levels of reality that lie beyond all conception of an ordinary mind.

For reaching those spiritual heights due preparation is necessary and the mystic way is bound up with it. The mystic way aims at the emancipation of soul, at its freedom from the poor life of illusion and at its consequent return to the spaceless realm of the Divine Unity.

The spiritual ideal is followed for the betterment of our life. The awareness that his senses are an inadequate instruments of knowledge aspires man to rise above the senses and to utilise them for a higher purpose. It is this incapacity to yield the necessary satisfaction that creates in him the desire for intellectual

and spiritual pursuits. Accompanied with it is the realization that the world is an illusion wherein everything is in a state of flux, a realization that makes man turn towards something higher than himself.¹

Man is a constant victim of frustration, disappointments of various kinds and calamities of all sorts, bodily pains, and a sense of helplessness and consciousness of having committed sin, which create in him a further inclination to seek spiritual life.² The curiosity to look back upon one's experience of a former life and of one's life as a child supplied the poetic or imaginative incentive to the higher life.³ A strong intellectual sympathy and understanding of the nature of misery and evil also brings about a change in the attitude of the individual and subsequently in the individual himself. Such an intellectual sympathy provides the necessary urge to gain spiritual life.⁴

In Sufism the progress of the spiritual life has been described as a journey or a pilgrimage. The Sufi who undertakes this pilgrimage or journey is the Sālik,

1. Banerjee : The Pathway to God in Kannada Literature; p.49.

2. Ibid. p.13.

3. Ibid. p.12.

4. Datta (V.H.): The Yoga of the Saints; p.45.

traveller. The wandering soul moves onwards following the Path, Tariqat and reaches the goal of union with Reality, which is called Fanā-fi'l-Haqlqat, absorption in Reality.

According to John A. Subhan some authorities divide the Path into seven stages.⁵ The first stage is Ubūdiyat, the stage of service, wherein the seeker endeavours to purify his soul through repentance. Ishq is the stage of Love in which the soul is under the divine influences that inclines it towards the love of God. The intense longing for God leads the aspirant to observe Poverty which is the lack of desire for everything except God. This desire for nothing but God leads him to the stage of Zūhd, Renunciation with which begins his purgative life.

After purifying himself the seeker contemplates the nature and attributes of God and reaches the stage of Arifat, knowledge or gnosis. "Gnosis is the life of the heart through God, and the turning away of one's inmost thoughts from all that is not God."⁶ Contemplation produces Hajd, Ecstasy, after which stage the

5. Subhan (John A.) : Sufism, its saints and shrines, pp. 68-72.

6. Ibid. p.70.

illuminated heart learns the true nature of Haqīqat, Reality and exercises tawakkūl, dependence on God. Faṣl, Union is the last stage wherein the seeker sees God face to face and enters the final experience of "Fanā wa Baqā", 'annihilation and subsistence'.

Ghazzālī talks of three stages on the path which leads the soul to reunion with God — the stage of the novice or seeker, al-murīd wherein the creature is conscious of his creatureliness and acknowledges the lordship of the Creator; the stage of the traveller, al-sāfir, wherein the seeker walks with his Lord and the stage of the gnostic, al-wāṣil who has attained to union with the Lord.⁷

In his preface to the fifth volume of the Mathnawī Rūnī writes about Sharī'at, the Law, Tariqat, the Path and Haqīqat, the Truth. "The Religious Law", he says, "is like a candle showing the way. Unless you gain possession of the candle, there is no wayfaring and when you have come on to the way, your wayfaring is the Path; and when you have reached the journey's end, that is the Truth. Hence it has been said, "If the truths (realities) were manifest, the religious laws would be nought."

7. Smith (Margaret) : Al-Ghazzālī; the mystic: p.152.

When copper becomes gold it is not at all in need of alchemy; nor does it need to rub itself upon the philosopher's stone. Now, learning alchemy from a teacher or from a book is the Law; rubbing copper on the stone is the Path and the transmutation of copper into gold is the Truth. Those who have reached this state are God's freemen. Again, the Law is like learning the science of medicine; Path is like regulating one's diet and taking medicine; Truth is gaining health and becoming free from them both. In other words, "the Law is knowledge, the Path, action, the Truth attainment unto God."

On the way the soul passes through stages, *maqālat*, experiences certain states, *ahwāl*, and is then raised progressively to the higher planes of consciousness called the Gnosis, *Ma'rifat* and the Truth, *Haqiqat*, wherein the gnostic, *ʿarif* realises that knowledge, knower and known are one. The seeker, *ṭālib* can have control over the stages of the Path, can acquire them by his own efforts, as against the states that descend from God; he himself being able neither to repel them nor to retain them at his own will.

Ḥujwiri draws distinction between 'station', *maqām* and 'state', *ḥāl* by saying that "station, *maqām* denotes anyone's standing in the way of God, and his

fulfilment of the obligations appertaining to that station, and his keeping it until he comprehends its perfection so far as it lies in a man's power. It is not permissible that he should quit his station without fulfilling the obligations thereof. State, *hāl* is a condition of feeling or disposition that descends from God, and is entirely out of the seeker's control. Station denotes the progress of the seeker in his journey in proportion to his merit, as against state, *hāl* which has no connection whatsoever with the endeavours of the seeker. It is the favour and grace of God bestowed upon him, making him dead to his empirical self.

Rūmī says that *maqām* is permanent station and *hāl* is passing state. *Hāl* is the succession of alternating psychological 'states' which are the characteristic of the seeker. *Maqām* indicates the spiritual perfection of the seeker in whom the states have passed beyond change and have become unified. The states are the result of momentary unveiling of the Divine Beauty and Majesty, which is revealed to both — one who experiences the states and one who experiences the *maqām*, station. But only the latter possesses it and enjoys it. Therefore *maqām* is superior to *hāl*; many enjoy *hāl*; only few attain to *maqām*. Nevertheless, the seeker must traverse all the stages, making himself perfect in each and every one of

of them, and must experience whatever states God bestows upon him before he advances further.

"The hāl is like the unwilling of that beautiful bride, while the maqām is the King's being along with the bride."⁸

II. The journey is three fold — the Path, the Grace and the Truth. It begins with faith. What is faith? The psychological roots of faith are not to be found in any one faculty of mind. Faith is the action and attitude of the whole personality. It is believing or accepting something as real and true, a conviction that compels trust and loyalty and reveals itself in action, as it involves an element of emotion and cannot be free from it.⁹

To believe in God, therefore, is not merely to accept the fact that He exists as one would accept the truth of a mathematical proposition; it means that one is ready to act on this belief. This attitude towards God reaches such heights, that the elements of feeling, will and intellect are freely blended and balanced. In other

8. The Mathnawi. Vol. I; 1435.

حال چون جلوه ست زان زبیا عروس .: وین مناک آن دولت آمد عروس

9. Solbis (W.B.): The Psychology of religion; p. 113.



words, when one believes, one believes with one's whole being and becomes involved in an attitude of trust and loyalty, which give one's faith its unique character.

There can be no argument about faith. It is there and that is all. One might argue into a vicious circle that God cannot be seen without faith, but now can one have faith in God without seeing God? and by so doing put an end to all effort and all achievement. This vicious circle must be broken somewhere if one is to proceed, and the aspirant must break it by making a beginning with faith, although its value can be realized neither at once nor even in any measurable time. The Gītā tells us that the true Bhakti requires faith or śraddhā; the devotee takes the supreme Reality on faith before it reveals itself to his consciousness.

Even worldly success cannot be gained without faith. Men would never exert his powers had he not the faith that the realisation of the desired object lies within his capacity. Hence Rūmī asks, don't you venture to put cargo aboard a ship on trust, in spite of the fact that you know not whether you will be drowned or saved? You do not insist that you should be certain of your fate before you embark, for in that case you will



never trade.¹⁰

Faith is associated with humility. It is cultivated as soon as man recognises his own nothingness and becomes as humble as the particle of dust. Spiritual life consists in knowledge, and he alone knows who knows that he knows nothing.

Faith rests very largely on experience and its test lies in the kind of conduct it produces and the contribution that it makes to life. One must, therefore, wait till one's faith is verified by experience and till it is in turn modified by the growth of that experience. In the words of Rūmī, one must take fire in hand in order that one gets light.

Disbelief in God injures men inasmuch as disbelief in himself injures him. The whole universe moves in obedience to God, and it is not possible for man to tear himself away from the Sea of Unity. Everyone has faith in God; only he is not aware of it. God is the sum-total of all that is, and man is of God just as a drop of water is of the ocean. He has faith in God in so far as he has faith in himself; without it he is destined to perish. In one word, faith is an incentive to spiritual progress in

10. The Mathnawi, Vol. III; 3083-90.

so far as it creates an appropriate mental state for the reception of instructions, thereby preparing the soil for the production of proper spiritual fruits. As the Gītā puts it:

"Arjuna, the faith of each is shaped to his own mental constitution. Faith constitutes the very being of man, therefore, whatever the nature of his faith, that verily he is."¹¹

And Rūmī says:

"When Thou madest me to tread
On the path of faith,
Thy trust on my back was laid
To be true till death."¹²

III. Well equipped with an immovable faith the aspirant enters the Purgative stage. The Purgative stage presupposes some kind of experience which suggests the need for purgation and thereby makes the beginning of the new life. It is Tawbat, Repentance, wherein the seeker becomes aware of evil in himself and resolves to desist from committing sinful deeds. As Nicholson defines it, repentance is "the awakening of the soul from the

11. The Bhagavadgītā: Ch. XVII; v. 2.

12. Arberry (A.J.) : The Rubaiyat of Jalal-al-Din Rumi; p.4.

slumber of heedlessness, so that the sinner becomes aware of his evil ways, and feels contrition for past disobedience."¹³

The first step in this direction is a close selfscrutiny on the part of the aspirant, a deep plunge into the well of one's own nature, as Hūmī puts it, wherein one looks within one's own mind or rather attends to one's own experience. This looking within is different from brooding in one's own mind upon one's own emotions, and must not be confused with being engaged in day-dreaming when the mind is shut-up within itself or with recalling of past experiences. It is to turn one's attention consciously to the content of experience, to one's feelings and emotions, thoughts and attitudes, desires and volitions, and to reflect about them besides observing them. In scientific terminology it is introspection, in which there is a transition from the objective to the subjective point of view, and the subject, instead of attending to the object, shifts his attention to what is taking place in his mind, at the same time reflecting about the nature and validity of his mental states.

The distorted mind cannot see correctly although

13. Nicholson (R.A.): The Mystics of Islam; p.30.

it has vain pretensions to seeing correctly. It ascribes all evil to other minds in spite of the fact that what it sees in them is nothing but its own image, a reflection of its own feelings and actions. Everyone sees everyone else from the circle of his own existence and others in turn see in him what he himself sees in them.

It is necessary, therefore, that man realises that he himself is the evil-doer and that he is fleeing from himself whenever he flees from others or else, he will perish miserably, like the lion who sprang into the well, mistaking his own reflection for his rival. In other words, man must be consciously aware that he is prone to sin. In the words of Rumi :

" When you reach the bottom of your own nature, then you will know that that villainess was from yourself."¹⁴

The consciousness of sin plays a great part in the evolution of religious experience. Man is in the possession of certain animal propensities. He is rational and volitional, as well as, instinctive and appetitive. His animal nature prompts his will to action

14. The Mathnawi. Vol. I; 1324.

چون بقدری خود اندر رسی : پس بدانی که زنو بد آن تا کسی

in a particular direction, while his reason and conscience prompt it to other direction. So the will is moved to higher or lower ends, and a conflict ensues. It is through this conflict that sin becomes possible.

In other words, sin is a matter of the will and has its roots in certain connate impulses and appetites of human nature. It carries with itself an awareness of freedom to follow what is regarded as lower course of action when higher is possible. That means the possibility of sin emerges with man's ability to choose between ends and the actions leading to them and with the failure on his part to substitute the ethical for the rational impulse.

Man is tempted because it is this possibility alone that raises man above animality; without it he would be merely an animal creature. Man's animal impulses and appetites are not sinful in themselves. They become sinful by the use he makes of them. Moreover man's actions are never merely instinctive in so far as he looks to the end which his instincts and actions serve rather than to the instincts and actions alone. The fact that he sins speaks for the presence of some higher ideal and the fact that remorse accompanies the sense of sin speaks for his consciousness of freedom and responsibility.

and his recognition of the higher ideal which he has failed to realise.

Remorse is not an end in itself. In the process of recovery what is necessary is repentance which is different from remorse although it depends on the degree of remorse experienced. Remorse depends on one's attitude to sin; but it looks only to the past with a feeling of regret. It is repentance which looks to the future with hope. The penitent recoils from sin and shifts his attention to the idea of never returning to it. As Al-Ghazālī points out, repentance is based on the conviction that there is no God but God. It is based on faith which he describes as a spot of light that teaches one to do that which is the will of God. And as it does so, it grows and grows till the whole heart becomes bright. The heart, then, realises that sin is destructive; godly fear enters that heart, and arouses the sincere desire for amendment of life for the abandonment of sin in the present and the future and for reparation for sins of the past. Repentance "results from the realisation that sin intervenes between the sinner and the Beloved; it is the grief of the heart, when it becomes aware of the absence of the Beloved."¹⁵

15. Smith (Margaret) : Al Ghazālī, the Mystic; pp.152-53.



In other words, repentance consists in looking forward to the Highest forgetting everything except the Highest. Feeling remorsefully upon one's own sin is an impediment to this contemplation of the Highest, in fact, to all spiritual progress. Nujwiri observe "In contemplation it is wrong to remember sin, for recollection of sin is a veil between God and the contemplative."¹⁶ This veil needs to be removed, if at all one is to proceed on the pathway to God. In the words of Rumi:

"When repentance has gone from the case of the heart to the pericardium after it is of no use to acknowledge one's sin."¹⁷

Repentance is the forsaking of the lower self for the higher. It is a process in which the self is unified under the impulse of higher ideas and motives, and has its psychological roots in an inhibition of the lower channels of nervous discharge through the identification of the ego with the new and higher activities. This process consists of a sense of unrest and imperfection accompanied by a longing for higher and better things,

16. Nicholson (R.A.) : The Mystics of Islam; pp. 31-32.

17. The Mathnawi. Vol. III; 644.

چون پشیمانی ز دل شد تا شغاف : زین سپس سودی در اراد امتزاف

a sudden crises which creates a feeling of passivity, a feeling of being under the power of another will and a sense of peace and satisfaction that follows.¹⁸ In other words, repentance is conversion.

There is no such thing as sudden conversion, although it appears to be so. As a matter of fact, conversion is the result of certain psychic forces that have long been maturing and gathering strength but manifest themselves suddenly. The impressions and experiences accumulated in the subconscious region remain there till they are forced into expression.

Repentance, thus, is the unselfing of the individual wherein the larger consciousness presses in on the individual consciousness. Often this breaks in suddenly as a great new revelation, and the individual emerges from a smaller and limited world of existence into a larger world of being. Rūmī would say, it is the human life purged of all evil and swallowed up by the life of God. All the sensual desires and sinful actions are wiped off; the individual makes more vigorous efforts in the quest of Truth, and the new life begins. And what are the conditions of true repentance?

18. Stobie (W.E.) : The Psychology of Religion; p.191.



"For true repentance there must needs be a glow of inward feeling and a flood of tears; such lightning and clouds are the conditions indispensable to repentance."¹⁹

Rūnī regards the time of illness as the time of wakefulness of conscience, as the very source of awakening because it arouses the penitent from the heedlessness by creating in him remorse and humility. However, he says death-bed repentance does not save anyone.

Even repentance is an act of Divine Grace, coming from God Himself rather than from man. It is not that God turns in mercy towards one who turns in penitence towards Him, but that the penitent turns towards God only when God turns towards him. It is only those that lack spiritual intelligence that do not repent.

IV. On the Purgative way the seeker is in need of a Spiritual Guide whose aid is indispensable. Rūnī emphasises the necessity of saintly guidance for all those who wage the holy war against the flesh and intent on inward purification. The purifying influence of the

19. The Mathnawi. Vol. II; 1653.

می بایده تاب و آبی تدبیرا : شرط شد برق و سحاب تدبیرا



Guide, the spiritual physician as Rumi calls him, is necessary in order that the soul is freed from the vices of corporeality and in order that the imperfect intelligence is raised to perfection through its association with the perfect intelligence.

The spiritual guide is a man of experience and knowledge. He teaches the disciple the proper method of achieving the ideal and frees him from the bonds of such vicious enemies as illusion, infatuation and egoism. By rendering him capable of one-pointed concentration on the name of God, he establishes union between the individual self and the Universal self and thereby confers beautification on the individual.

The Light of God when unveiled is unbearable to the unprepared soul. What is needed is spiritual knowledge and insight, the word of wisdom which would prepare it for entrance into the illuminative and contemplative life, thereby making it capable of receiving the Light Divine without veils. None but the Perfect Man can venture to reach the Sea of Light by his own efforts and he is the proper guide on the way. Those who follow him are saved; those who think that they can save themselves are doomed. What opens the door to the spiritual world is the cumulative effect of three forces, the grace of

God, the power of the guide and the power of his company. It is an error, therefore, to rely on one's own strength in overcoming the dangers and temptations on the way. The sick soul must consult the spiritual physician and be cured. Saye Rūmi:

" Go thou take refuge in the shadow
of the Sage, that thou mayest escape
from the enemy that opposes thee
in secret."²⁰

The spiritual guide is the medium of spiritual regeneration in the disciple. Man has the capacity for faith, knowledge and love deposited in him by the Divine Providence, and it is the business of the guide to bring to life these latent faculties which have been destroyed by sensuality, to bring the spiritual embryo to birth by his counsel and instruction.

There are in the world things pure and impure, 'the pearl in one shell and the worthless bead in the other', as Rūmi puts it. Man's truth which is his spirit is concealed in his falsehood which is his body, like the taste of butter in the taste of buttermilk. The mortal body is a proof of the immortal spirit just as the drunken

20. Ibid. Vol. I. 2967.

تذکرہ در سایہٴ قلمِ کریم : تاریخِ زمانِ دشمنِ پنهان سبز

reveller is a proof of the cup-bearer. It needs the skill of a guide, who is the chosen messenger of God, the churner of buttermilk, to initiate the novice and to spire him into the mysteries of his own true self.²¹ The true believer is all ear to his call and retains the inspiration in the same way as the child retains the mother's words and learns to speak. This is his new birth, the spiritual birth, wherein the genuine is distinguished from the counterfeit through the touchstone, the touchstone being the guide whose heavenly influences work miracles of spiritual regeneration in the disciple. To repeat the words of the Gītā:

"The omnipresent Lord does not partake of the virtue or sin of anyone. Knowledge is enveloped in ignorance; hence it is that beings are constantly falling a prey to delusion."²²

And Rūmī says, one cannot cease to be a prey to delusion,

"Till the speech of a chosen servant, which is part of the speech of him (the prophet), enter into the ear of him who is seeking inspiration."²³

21. Ibid. Vol. IV; 3030-33.

22. The Bhagavadgītā: Ch. V; v-15.

23. The Mathnavi. Vol. IV; 3035.

تا کلام بنده تا آن جزو است : در رود در گردش او که وحی جوست

The disciple must cultivate the habit of disciplinary silence, the habit of silent attention before the guide. The guide influences the disciple by virtue of his spiritual illumination and words, being an expression of selfhood, bar the way to illumination. In things spiritual no speech is essential, because speech, being an accompaniment of the world of plurality, is an inadequate instrument of expressing the inward reality.

Moreover, hidden things grow more fully and perfectly. Rūmi believes that even words, when they remain unspoken, produce spiritual kernels. In silence they mature, just as the inward secret of the seeds when hidden in earth, blooms into a garden. It is needless to say, therefore, that reality suffers loss through self expression. There is a way from bosom to bosom, and the guide, who is in immediate touch with the disciple's heart, influences him by his inward qualities, by his inward thoughts and feelings.

But silence is not vacancy nor merely a passive state into which one lapses at will. It is the quiescence of a fullness that is free from all hurrying outward thoughts and consequently an entering into the region of central calm. So outward silence is a prelude to the inward silence and stillness. George Fox admits that silence

is the only real preparation for all worship, and Rūmī agrees with him when he says that the true disciple is breathless with adoration.

"In as much as thou art an ear and
 be a tongue, not thy congener God
 said to the ears 'Be silent!'"²⁴

The disciple must do away with worldly attachments and preoccupations, and discard all egoism, lest he is rendered incapable of receiving the divine lesson. The saintly influence of the guide does not belong to the phenomenal world, as he is not what he appears to be. He is a mirror between the disciple and the invisible teacher, God, who Himself dictates from behind the mirror. God is the real Teacher although apparently the inward transformation of the disciple takes place through the spirituality of the guide, resulting in the birth of the disciple in the spiritual world.

It is the man full of egoism that sees nothing but himself in the guide, quite ignorant of the eloquent Divine Essence behind his discourse. Rūmī compares such a disciple to the parrot that looks into the mirror and thinks that a bird of its own kind is talking to it. The

24. Ibid. Vol. I; 1622.

چون ند گوئی اوزبان فی جنبی ند: گو شیار حق بنمود انفتو

inward reality of the guide is hidden from him, and he learns only the words and language of the sufi, only the formal impressions rather than the eternal mystery symbolised by them. He is the seat of all mischief and his claim to spiritual authority is notorious because spiritual power in his unworthy hands becomes more perilous than the misuse of temporal power. Rūmī would say, it is even more perilous than a sword in the hand of a brigand. In so far as this is so, he is in no position to receive instructions from the guide. Only divine mercy can open his eyes and show him the right way.

"He supposes that a man is speaking;
and the other (Universal Reason) is
a mystery of which he is ignorant."²⁵

An unquestioning obedience to the authority of the spiritual guide is necessary in the disciple. The disciple must show the guide the absolute devotion and submission, and must obey him in everything without the slightest reserve or hesitation. He must be very patient with the guide and bear with whatever he does or says, however incomprehensible and unlawful his action may

25. Ibid. Vol. V, 1439.

او گمان دارد که میگوید بشر: و آن دگر سرست و روز آن بی خبر

seen. Rūmī repeatedly emphasises this point by reference to the well-known story of Khīzar and Moses, in which Khīzar threatened to leave Moses owing to Moses' inquisitiveness about his each and every action out of way. It is not desirable on the part of the novice to inquire curiously about the merit and demerit attached to the external observances of the guide, or to seek to find out how far these observances might fall short of the highest standard, because it is the guide who knows the essence of all things and not the novice.

"Bear patiently whatever is done by a Khīzar who is without hypocrisy, in order that Khīzar may not say, 'Begone, this is our parting'. Keep thine eye always paired with (un-separated from) his face: do not stir up dust by way of discussion and argument."²⁶

Under the care and guidance of the guide the novice advances stage by stage towards perfection, till he realises his own essential oneness with God. The disciple first receives only the reflections of the

26. Ibid. Vol. I; 2970; Vol. VI; 2645.

صبر کن بر کار خیزی بے تفاق :: تا نگویہ خضر روضہ افراق
چشم را باروی دار جنت :: گرد ملکان ز راه بحث و گفت

Divine nature, that shines in the guide's heart. This is taqlīd or imitation and this imitation of the saint by the disciple is necessary in the early stages of the mystical life, because the disciple has to make the beginning by imitating the spiritual guide and by accepting whatever he says and does as authoritative.

But taqlīd, imitation develops into tahqīq, the finding of the truth. The reflections of the Divine Light received by the disciple gradually instill pure knowledge of God into his heart, through the constant repetition of these reflections accompanied by the disciple's own advancement on the path.

Taqlīd, therefore, has its own virtues, however much it is opposed to genuine spiritual experience and however much the imitator is actuated by self interest. It does not yield the knowledge of God by itself but serves as a stepping stone to the knowledge of God. The imitator in the end finds in himself the truth which he believes he has learnt from another. Rīdā compares him to a house-breaker who discovers that he has broken into his own house. And what liberates the imitator from imitation is Divine Grace that turns the "stolen knowledge" into real knowledge. Therefore, the disciple must not quit the guide before taqlīd has become tahqīq, before

the raindrop has become a pearl and before he beholds his true nature as the expression of the divine.

"Know that the reflexion first cast is only imitation, but when it has become successive (continually recurrent) it turns into direct realization of the truth."²⁷

The first thing that the seeker achieves under the guidance of the guide is Faqr or Poverty. Poverty is detachment, not only from all that is worldly and unreal but also from every thought and wish that would divert one's mind from God. Even the hope of gaining spiritual peace in this world and entrance into heaven in the next is an obstruction to it. The true faqir possesses neither anything nor is possessed by desire for anything save the Lord. Being denuded of the sense of otherness he does not attribute to himself any thought, feeling or will. One is not truly poor, says Eckhart, if one has a will to perform the will of God or even any desire for him. The real poor wills, knows and desires nothing. As it is pointed out by Chazzāli, it is the rule of the sufi that Poverty should be his adornment, Patience

27. Ibid. Vol. II. 567.

عکس کا دل زد تو آن تقلید دان : چون بیای شد شود تحقیق آن

his ornament, Satisfaction his steed and Trust his dignity.²⁸

In other words, poverty is to be exterior of the mind, of the world of matter and of the future too. It is the return of the soul to the original state of non-existence and is invalidated by the very consciousness of its possession on the part of its possessor. The Prophet said, poverty is my pride; and Rūmi says, when poverty is complete nothing exists save God.

"That dervish-hood is not for the sake of avoiding entanglement with the world, no, it is because nothing exists but God."²⁹

V. Now begins self-mortification, Jihād-i-akbar, as Rūmi calls it, the greater warfare which is the chief work of the Path. At the core of man's personality is a something too holy to consent to any evil, a spark lighted at the altar of God, an inner light which can illuminate his whole being. And the process of self mortification consists in calling this faculty into activity.

28. Smith (Margaret) : At Ghazālī; the Mystic; pp. 162-63.

29. The Mathnawī. Vol. II; 3497.

آن فقیری، هر چه بیا سچ نیست : بل بی آن که. بجزدق صبح نیست

It is a method of keeping this spirit alive and leading it into a flame of devotion, insight and communion with the Divine Beloved.

The long and arduous spiritual journey has its origin in the perception that if reality seems evil, it is caused by some defect in man's vision itself. Therefore he must work on his own soul, that has excluded him from the vision of reality as divine. He must turn himself over before he overcomes this estrangement and faces the world. Often the starting point is a moment of illumination in which there is a sudden perception of supreme worth. The experience is alluring with its promise from a new world with which comes the certainty that this is the real world, which had been concealed from him up till now.

Behind mortification lies a long period of subconscious preparation, which manifests itself in restlessness, longing for peace and dissatisfaction with the conventional religious forms. Coupled with these there lingers an intense desire for self-realisation and for an atmosphere which will make it possible. Man's nature is inherently religious and his religion is closely bound up even with his instincts and their functioning, so much so that he is but moved when it becomes conscious and articulate. Consequently, his discontent with the

prevailing intellectual and spiritual surroundings belongs to the development of his personality, which starts to discover a new and happier surrounding for itself.

The essential prerequisite for the encounter with the higher world is self-purification, a recoil from evil. The mystic insight cannot be won without preparation of the will, which operation demands that the self is stripped, cleansed and purified. This is attained through mortification, a process that wards off everything that would quench the spark of divine life and hinder spiritual progress, thereby opening up new avenues of entrance to the ultimate identification with God.

The greatest obstacle to the attainment of this end is man or the carnal soul that engages man's attention for too much. Man has within himself an earthly world as well as the heavenly, the selfish as well as the divine, that make of him an outerman and an innerman. He is carnal if he submits to the former; he is spiritual if he submits to the latter. Mortification of the flesh becomes necessary because man impoverishes himself by yielding to its unholy influence. And what is mortification? It is killing the fleshly soul, subduing it and purging it of its sensual passions and desires by making

it subject to hard discipline and thereby moulding it in such a way that the very inward source of its vile nature is removed and it no more hinders the heart from acting sincerely towards God. In this denial of the lower self a series of inhibitions in the form of solitude, fasting and silence is implied.

Divine Grace helps man in his struggle against the flesh and in his ultimate triumph over it, because as Rūmī says, it is the worst of all enemies in the world, the dragon that cannot be slain, the fire that cannot be extinguished by oceans and oceans of water. And until this enemy of sensuality be mortified, it does not cease to be contrary to the spirit, and the soul cannot go forth in complete freedom to the fruition of the union with the Divine Beloved.

" To slay this enemy is not the work of reason and intelligence : the inward lion is not subdued by the hand. To God alone belongs this feat (power) to kill it, who indeed, but God should draw its bow (vanquish it)."³⁰

30. Ibid. Vol. I; 1374; 1383.

کشتن این کار عقل و تدبیر نیست : شیر را باطن سفره خرگوش بست
این قدم حق را بود که را کشد : غیر حق خود کوی کمان او کشد

St. John of the Cross agrees with Rūmi when he says that the soul must be emptied of all imagined forms, figures and images, and must remain in complete darkness in respect of these, if at all it is to attain Divine Union. Taoism repeats these words when it declares that one cannot apprehend the spiritual essence of Tao unless one is eternally free from earthly passions. For as Rūmi says, the soul is cramped in the narrow house of the body; God ruins it in order to make a royal palace out of it.

Egoism is another obstacle to the vision of Truth. Individuality is the original sin of all existence, because it bespeaks limitation and limitation is ignorance. In other words, it is not only an illusion itself but also the very source of all illusion, a veil, as Rūmi calls it, that creates a false view of the essential relation between the seeker and the sought, and thereby causes the heart to turn away from the contemplation of God.

As such, veiled is he who regards himself as an individual, and is still in the stage of separation, like the thief who gratifies his selfish desires in the darkness of the world, thinking that the stolen goods belong to him. Egoism betrays man and robs him of all the capacity for spiritual life in him, so much so that even the very awareness that one has removed the veil becomes a veil and prevents the removal of it. Consequently,

the so-called elect are veiled too, veiled by their desire for future recompense and for the divine favour. The veil in any form must be removed, lest all human efforts towards freedom and bliss become futile, even sinful.

And how to remove this veil? It is through mortification that empties the self of the sense of 'I' by awakening man to the realisation that he is the possessor of nothing. Every thing, every possession, material and immaterial, every thought, feeling and action, belongs to God who is the creator of these one and all.

Nevertheless, Divine Grace is indispensable, whatever man's own endeavours to escape from self-consciousness may be. God alone can deliver man from all thoughts of self and from the snares of temptations and dangers which envelope him every moment.

"When self-interest appears, virtues
becomes hidden; a hundred veils rise
from the heart to the eye."³¹

And indeed, man strives only when God strives.

"Cast away this contrivance of yours

31. Ibid. Vol. I; 334.

چون غرض آمد صغیر پوشیده شد : صد حجاب اردل سبوی دیده شد



before the Beloved — though your
contrivance indeed is of His
contriving."³²

Man is a constant victim of various distractions
and he indulges in diverse fantasies caused by them. This
distracts him from the main object of pursuit of spiritual
values. It is, therefore, necessary that he should be
free from such fantasies rooted in his attachment to the
physical world.

Rūmī says these fantasies lead man astray by
suggesting a false trail thereby making the pursuer lose
the true object of soul or else they employ the lesser
good as a temptation for the seeker of the great & good,
and by so doing hinder the achievement of the greater
good. Consequently, the pursuit of these unreal things
is nothing but a sheer waste of a life. And the world
has lots and lots of these to offer to men so that to
use Rūmī's words, in the pursuit of the bait he does not
see the trap at all.³³ The trap-spreader is the world
which Rūmī regards as a sleeper's dream, and its delights

32. Ibid. Vol. II; 1060.

نگین این تدبیر خود را پیش دولت .. گرچه تدبیرت هم از تدبیر اوست

33. Ibid. Vol. V; 648.

بس مریه مملکت خام را .. کند بی دانه نبیند دانه را

as things eaten in sleep. In the desert of Absolute Being, the world is a mirage; or rather it is the 'false dawn', the false hour of twilight before dawn.

Worldly wealth and power is destructive to spiritual life and man's love and attachment to these is another tie to be broken. Salvation consists in renouncing the world, because after all as Rūmī observes, man will not be profitted by what he has eaten in sleep. As such, the seeker must endeavour to do away with all his worldly attachments and pre-occupations and his endeavours lie in self-mortification that is founded on purging of the heart of everything except God. It is by being subject to this painful process that the soul becomes capable of brushing aside all phenomenal illusions and of penetrating the inmost sanctuary of Pure Being. Only the unripe fruits cling to the bough. And what is ripeness? It is detachment which consists in shutting oneself to the outside world and turning one's vision inward. As the Gītā expresses it:

"He, who gives up all desires and
moves free from attachment, egoism
and thirst for enjoyment, attains
peace."³⁴

34. The Bhagavadgītā; Ch. II; v. 71.

And Rūmī says:

"O son, burst thy chains and be free!
How long wilt thou be a bondsman to
silver and gold?"³⁵

All this, however, does not mean that Rūmī encourages solitary asceticism condemning the world and man's life in it. On the contrary, he contrasts the path of self-discipline and self-conquest with asceticism which, he asserts, cuts off all temptations and by so doing deprives man of all the means whereby his virtue is tested and wisdom made perfect.

Man is powerless against the sensual appetites; yet temptations are a necessity for his perfection. There can be no self-restraint in the absence of desire, no courage in the absence of adversary and no chastity in the absence of lust. The very fact that there is the need of a holy war presupposes and implies the presence of enemy, just as self-restraint implies capacity for self-indulgence. In the words of Rūmī, the Divine Command 'Eat' is surely a temptation; but there is another command 'Do not exceed', and that is temperance.³⁶ There is the

35. The Mathnawī, Vol. I; 19.

بند بگسل باش آزادای پسر: چند باشی بند سیم و بند زر

36. Ibid., Vol. V; 574-85.

logical correlation between the two, one involving the other just as there is the logical correlation between subject and predicate. There is the devil to drag man to perdition because there is also the road to salvation.

And this devil, the greatest of all preceptors, is placed by Kūmī on the level of Perfect Man. The devil, he says, is the real touch-stone on which is tested the righteous and the sinful alike. He does not make only one evil just as he does not make anyone good. In fact, he helps the good in their way to perfection by displaying the vices of the evil. How can he, then, pervert the good? All evil and all deception proceeds from men themselves. Only they lay their own evil at his door. As Ghazālī points out true asceticism means that the seeker controls his passions and makes them sub-ordinate to the spirit, so that in the end the soul becomes free from the bondage of the flesh. It is striving against the world and the flesh, and as this striving includes knowledge, feeling and action, the presence of adversary is a necessity.³⁷

In other words, spiritual perfection is not attained by throwing the sensual appetites and passions away but

37. Smith (Margaret) : Al-Ghazālī, the Mystic; p.155.

by mastering them in such a way that they are purged of all grossness and are thereby transformed into virtues of the soul. The senses are not to be suppressed but cultivated to see the truth. They must be trained to such an extent that the eyes see no object, the ears hear no sound and the soul, discriminating and transcending all forms of sense-consciousness, becomes capable of estimating its own real worth. The senses must be subject to reason and religion, says Ghazzālī, just as horse and dog must be subject to the hunter. It is not possible to hunt without the dog; but then the dog must be trained to be obedient, lest it falls upon the hunter himself.³⁸

The Buddha emphasised the same point when he declared that spiritual insight is an expansion and development of intellectual vijñāna and sense perception. He enunciated the system free from the two extremes of self-indulgence and self-mortification — the middle path, the only path leading to the higher wisdom and to Nirvāṇa. This is the Aristotelian doctrine of the golden mean which declares that virtue is a mean between two extremes. The *Gītā* accepts it just as the Buddha accepts it and just as Rūmī accepts it. What is required, says Rūmī, is a burning away of only those conditions of the soul that are evil, and their subsequent replacement by the opposite

38. Ibid. p.70.

conditions.

So bodily life and sensual appetites are essential for the complete development of the powers of the soul. Human powers and capacities do give rise to false confidence and lead to disaster in case they are not devoted to higher purposes. Yet man cannot do without these in so far as they can be devoted to the task of developing the spiritual powers latent in man. This is the best and the only way of realising the bodily powers, so that in the end the holy war and the confusion remain not, but only the enlightened spirit like gold tested on the touchstone.

And where does this transformation take place? It takes place in the world of matter itself. Every appearance holds a reality, both being logically correlated in such a way that neither has meaning without the other. The world too holds within itself the One Reality of which it is merely a husk. By meditating on it the seeker is inspired by love for the Divine Object. Grape-juice becomes wine only when it is fermented in the jar, and fermented in the jar of the world, the soul becomes pure wine of the yonder world, for what is the purpose of earthly life if not purification?

The world bespeaks other stages of existence which

lie ahead, and itself serves as a stepping stone to man's ascendance to those stages. In itself it is neither good nor bad; and yet, it is a snare to those who seek it for selfish ends and a boon to those who utilize it for the Divine purposes. Rūai, therefore, calls it a dying vessel in which the soul is coloured, coloured by its association with matter itself. What is to be renounced is one's love of the world and its goods, rather than the goods themselves. In reality, it is nothing but universal good serving the end of providence, and bestowing upon man a new life beyond its own range. Says Rūi:

"Without him I descended in desire of thee,
O beloved

Draw me forth from this vat that I may take
another him."³⁹

Nevertheless, a certain amount of asceticism in the way of abstinence from the world and its pleasures is necessary till one reaches the state of the pure and till one transcends all need for abstinence. Man cannot eradicate desire so long as he lives in the midst of passion. What is indispensable is a deliberate escape from the

39. Nicholson (R.A.) : Selected Poems from the Divan-i-Shams-i-Tabriz; p. 280.

بیرنگ فروز قسم «عشق تداوی دلبر: برکشی تداوین قسم تارنگ دگر گیرم»

circle of temptations in the early stages and hard ascetic discipline that would eradicate all desire and the very need for the ascetic discipline itself. To use the words of Ghazzālī, solitude sets the heart free for adoration and reflection and for communion with God through confidential intercourse with Him, for it is only when the heart is at leisure from itself that it is prepared to receive the divine revelation.⁴⁰ But, as Rūmī points out, the externals of asceticism can have no worth and meaning if they are set apart from the inner spiritual life of man. All acts of asceticism, he asserts, are polytheism if they are directed towards any selfish motive or to any being other than God.

"Because he has attained to spiritual health and has been set free from the need for abstinence, while the poor seeker of God is still in the state of fever."⁴¹

Only Divine Grace can prevent these acts of asceticism from being harmful and make them capable of producing proper spiritual results. What is therefore,

40. Smith (Margaret) : Al-Ghazālī, the Mystic; p. 169.

41. The Mathnawī. Vol. I; 1604.

زانکه صحت یامت و از برهیزست : طالب مسکین میان تب درست

needed is a complete resignation to the Divine Will, coupled with a firm determination on the part of the novice never to retire from striving, never to relax till the goal is reached. Rumi says that the goal shall be reached however much unfruitful the acts of asceticism and words of devotion may be in the beginning.

Thus mortification is the inner transmutation of man accomplished by a moral discipline which subdues the least worthy in him in favour of those that make for the absorption in the life of the spirit. It is a process, whereby one proceeds to God by way of abstraction, of denying to oneself all bodily and sensible attributes, all intelligible attributes, in fact all that would keep one among created beings and away from God. As Nicholson defines it, "Self mortification is a moral transmutation of the inner man."⁴² Under this ethical discipline the lower self is purged of its evil attributes and their opposite qualities are replaced.

This transmutation is worked upon the raw material of the psychic or spiritual and the physical faculties inherent in man and an unusually acute sensitiveness to the former. It is accomplished in such a way that an experience, in which there is a co-operation and due balance

42. Nicholson (R.A.): The Mystics of Islam; p. 41.



of the various psychological factors and faculties, is effected. It is in this experience that the self is realised, or rather it merges itself in the vast sea of unity, and thereby finds itself. Therefore, when one says that the self is realised, what one wants us to take into account is not only the mystical process, but also the psychological process involved in it, whereby all the false attributes of the not-self are cast away and the pure self stands in its purity and grandeur.

Man must, therefore, be consumed and transcended by mortification. Before his descent to the material world, he was merged in the spirit of God. Rūmi calls it 'night' which was free from all care and all pain. Then day came and God became grief-inflicting and brought man into the world of matter. And man lost all his freedom and all his happiness.

But then, his spiritual essence, his *ooliform* nature remained hidden in his earthly nature, like the golden treasure beneath the house. The unfoldment of this essence is the highest realisation, the *Ātman* within man as the Bṛihadāraṇyakoṇisad calls it, the reality that is nearest to him, that is the highest object of desire and the very kernel of existence. Underneath the river water lie jewels and pearls, says Rūmi, but the water is turbid

and the jewels cannot be seen. Beyond the air there shines the Sun, but the air is mixed with dust and the Sun cannot be seen. Man is under the contaminating influence of body and God cannot be seen.

Now, how to promote his recovery? How to lay the new foundation? Rūmī would say it is to be done by uprooting the first foundation. Cultivation consists in devastation, success in failure and existence in non-existence. Ruining the soil makes it a rose garden, and ruining the house for the sake of the treasure makes it a better one, raised to prosperity by the very treasure beneath it.⁴³

In other words, what is essential for the achievement of a better and higher life is destruction or death. Man's union with God, his resurrection, as Rūmī calls it, cannot take place till his unreal self has passed away, and till his earthen body has become a mirror reflecting the two worlds. The flower must fade and fall, if the fruit is to appear; the bread must be broken, if it is to give strength, and the grapes must be crushed, if they are to yield wine.

And what is death? Death is not annihilation, but only dissolution. The bodily particles disperse; but

⁴³. The Mathnawī. Vol. I; 307.

کرد ویران خانه بجز گنج زر :: و ز همان گنجش کند معبود تر

God joins the spiritual faculties in the world beyond, and prepares a new vehicle for the dead that is homogeneous with its character and essential nature. And when Rūmī says that man's death is of the same quality as man himself, he expresses the view that man has a spiritual body besides the material body, and that the spiritual body corresponds to the material body.

Ghazzālī gives a similar conception. Death is not the end of existence; it is merely the separation from the world and a closer approach to God. Consequently, the world is only a place of sowing for the world to come, in which takes place the consummation of the fellowship with God which began on earth.⁴⁴

In so far as this is so, death may be said to be a mirror in which everyone sees his own image, an honest reflexion of his real nature. Man's dread of death is nothing but his dread of himself, proceeding from him as the leaf proceeds from the tree. To the wicked death is hateful. And what is it to the good? Rūmī would say, to the good it is the gateway to resurrection and new forms of spiritual life, in fact, to the second birth of

⁴⁴. Smith (Margaret): Al-Ghazālī, the Mystic; p. 94.

men. Men are asleep, said the Prophet, and when they die they awake. Rūmī repeats these words when he says:

"Inasmuch as in death he sees a
hundred existences, like the
moth he burns away his own
existence."⁴⁵

Prayer is another means of self-purification. What is prayer? Rūmī says, prayer is a longing of the soul. It is a way of doing good, a yearning after righteousness, after a clean heart and a right spirit within it. This involves the hard task of self-scrutiny on the part of one who prays, so that he truly examines himself in the light of the best he knows, repudiating all that is vile in himself and overcoming it by the very act of repudiating it. He proceeds with the fixed determination to deny all things whether good or evil in the pursuit of the One God, transcending these in principles, if not in detail, for to adopt the ideal is to identify oneself with it.

The psychological roots of prayer lie in the desire inherent in man for intercourse with others, in

45. The Mathnawī. Vol. I; 3966.

چونک اندر مرگ بیند صد وجود : همه پروانه بسوزاند و پرد

the impulse in him to approach the powers around him and above him, in such a way that he gains their favour. This he does by shaping his attitudes and actions in a particular way, and prayer symbolises this reshaping of the attitudes and actions referred to the power outside himself. And whether it be a confident approach to the Deity or a fearful one, the underlying attitude is fundamentally the same in so far as they are directed by identical needs. In both cases it bespeaks man's native sense of dependence on powers outside himself and on his sensible world.

In other words, prayer is nothing but an expression of a nature inherent in man, the religious functioning of the primitive instincts in him. It estimates his needs, his confession of sin, praises and his converse with the divine — the most natural outcome of a religious consciousness. Prayer is the right relationship, which should prevail between the worshipper and the object of his worship.

It is in the very consciousness of dependence on a power outside oneself and greater than oneself that the subjective efficacy of prayer depends. The influence of prayer is subjective in the sense that it produces subjective results by the way of contributing to the moral

and spiritual development of the praying person. This is attained by the process of auto-suggestion. Even then it is more than auto-suggestion, because the abandonment of self will and voluntary effort, the most essential pre-requisite for true prayer, is attained by the mental attitude of the praying person and not by auto-suggestion. As a matter of fact, prayer is not undertaken merely for the sake of its effects on the mind of the subject, but primarily for the purpose of coming into communion with the Divine Being, and the spiritual effect of all prayer depends on faith in the Deity to whom it is addressed. Without living faith in the presence of God within no prayer is possible.

Rūmī therefore says, the formal prayer is not true prayer. True prayer is unconditioned and infinite, without beginning and without end, in itself a stepping stone to the ultimate absorption in the Divine Unity. And how does it foster this absorption? This it accomplishes by drowning and naughting all self-consciousness, which is itself the outcome of an intense concentration of each and every faculty on God, for one who is conscious of oneself as existing and acting individually denies the Divine Unity.

"This uttering of praise to Him is really the omission of praise on my part, for this praise is a proof of my being, and being is a sin."⁴⁶

Now that the subject has entered the initial stage of prayer by forgetting himself, he proceeds by discarding his bestial nature and casting away the worldly interests. His bowing and prostrating is in utter humility and self-abasement so that he may return to his original confession of faith made before God. Thereupon he reaches the last and the final stage of prayer, the effacement of the worshipper in the act of worship without consciousness of worship. As a matter of fact, even the form of the ritual prayer with its four pillars — the standing up, *qiyām*, the bowing, *rūkū*, the prostration, *sūjūd* and the confession of faith, *tasbeehūd* tell of man's coming into the world of matter and his ultimate return to the world beyond.

St. Teresa distinguishes four degrees of prayer according to their psychological effects. In the first stage of meditation all the powers of the soul act naturally and freely. Recollection and the Prayer of quiet is the second stage, in which the will is united to God,

46. Ibid. Vol. I; 517.

این نمازگفتن زن ترک نشاست. : بکین دلیل مستی و مستی طاعت

and in the next stage even imagination and intellect are included into union. It is in the fourth and the last stage that a complete union of all the powers takes place. In her last work 'The Spiritual Castle' however, she places re-collection and 'quiet' in the fourth mansion, 'union' in the fifth, 'complete union' and 'ecstasy' in the sixth, and the 'spiritual marriage' in the seventh mansion of the soul.⁴⁷

But however much people may differ as to the stages of prayer, there remains one undisputed fact true to all prayer, the fact that one who asks and one who is asked are fundamentally one in nature, for what is it to worship but to realize the excellent qualities of the Divine Object in oneself? In its ultimate significance prayer is a self-inculcation and self-mortification; self-mortification and self-sacrifice, humility and sincere devotion constitute its very essence.

Prayer constitutes a greater part, if not whole, of man's striving for the Highest, so much so that even the atheistic religions like Buddhism and Jainism talk of it. Mahayana Buddhism regards prayer as a mental training for the attainment of Buddhahood, because a prayer addressed to a Buddha awakens in one's own mind or Chitta, the same chitta as the Buddha's own. Similarly,

47. Encyclopaedia of Religion and Ethics. St. Teresa. vol. III.

in Jainism there are traces of the reference to powers outside oneself for help and guidance in so far as it gives place for salutation and adoration of great saints and their principles with a view to encouraging the worshipper for penance or austerities. And this reference to powers outside and beyond oneself lies at the root of all prayer. Six things make prayer an inner reality, says Ghazzālī, the presence of the heart, understanding, adoration, awe, hope and shame.⁴⁸ Its inner significance is the contemplation of God, wherein the soul is disembodied at leisure, is freed from the effects of time and space and looks spiritually upon Him.

Hence, as Idsteoy says, prayer is complete meditation; it is melting into the higher self; and as Gandhi says: "Prayer has been never known to have failed anybody. Prayer means being one with God."⁴⁹ Rūmī echoes their words when he says that prayer is the ascension of the soul which brings union with God as a recompense from God Himself. Every time of prayer is a new nearness to God, and every place is a place for it, for as Ghazzālī points out, God is face to face with oneself and the soul is in

48. Smith (Margaret) : Al-Ghazzālī, the Mystic; p.99

49. Gandhi (M.K.): The Supreme Power; p.89.

intimate conversation with Him.⁵⁰

Rūmī believes that such a prayer, in as much as it springs from the presence of God in the heart, is always accompanied by an immediate inward response, and is answered even before it is uttered. The invocation of the selfless devotee proceeds in reality from God Himself, because the speaker is naught, both his body and his spirit being unaware of the supplication and prayer. And as Rūmī points out, these supplication and prayer are the divine messengers to the devotee, whose attempts to gaining access to God are nothing but God's own drawing him towards Himself. Furthermore, it is this pull of the Divine that releases him from the bonds of worldliness. The mother seeks her child; the water is confined in a tank. It is the business of the powerful wind which is itself free to free the water and carry it to its original source. This it accomplishes by sucking it up little by little in such a way that its disappearance is indiscernible. In the like manner the soul is released from the prison of the world by the good words of prayer. With these words of praise and worship man's breath soars up to God.⁵¹

50. Smith (Margaret) : Al-Ghazālī, the Mystic; p.98.

51. The Mathnawi. Vol. I; 878-85.

And what is the source of man's delight in prayer? It is Divine Love which causes the soul to have more and more of those words and praises. Hence Rūmī says, your calling 'O God!' is God's own 'Here am I'; beneath every 'O Lord', is many a 'Here am I' from God Himself. To use his own words:

"At every moment there come to him
from God a hundred messives, a
hundred couriers; from him one
cry of "O my Lord!" and from God
a hundred cries of "Labbayka"
(Here am I!)."52

However, those words and praises, these supplications and prayers confer no benefit on God Himself, although He commands men to sow the seeds of good words and deeds. They are beneficial to the subject himself, in so far as they renew God's bounty towards him; otherwise as Rūmī says:

"From that sowing neither do glory
and grandeur accrue to the earth,
nor riches to the owner of the
earth."53

52. Ibid. Vol. I; 1578.

هر دشتی صد نام صد بیک از خدا: یار بی زو ثقت بیک از خدا

53. Ibid. Vol. V; 1285.

نه زمین داران فروغ و کمتری: نه خداوند زمین داتوانگری

Thus prayer is more than a mere humble entreaty, although it does begin as a conscious effort to approach God with true humility. Prayer is the emptying of the mind of all conscious process of thought and filling it with the spirit of God. In itself it is an experience that enhances the powers of the soul by creating the consciousness of guilt and perfection, of humility and self reliance and of selflessness and power, and thereby results in an enlargement, elevation and transformation of one's own nature. In a word, prayer is the source of ineffable peace and of attuning the soul with the Infinite.

It is the prayer of the Perfect Man alone that is the perfect prayer, and he alone derives perfect delight from it. United as he is with the Divine Beloved his prayer cannot be separated from that of God. His petition to God is, in reality, the petition of God to Himself, for is not God his ear, his eye and his tongue? In the words of Rūmī:

"The prayer of a Shaykh (Spiritual Director) is not like every prayer; he is naughted (fānī) and his words are the words of God. Since God asks and begs of Himself, how, then, should He refuse to grant His own prayer?"⁵⁴

54. Ibid. Vol. V; 2243-44.

کائنات دمای شیخ نه چون پردماست :: نانی است و گشت ارگشت خداست
چون خدا از خود سوال و که کند :: پس دمای خویش را چون رد کنو

VI The emphasis on the exercises of spiritual abstraction, whereby the individual withdraws his powers from the external world, and devotes them to the cultivation and development of spiritual powers, is common to many thinkers and mystics besides Rūl. Strangely enough they have agreed even in the methods through which the soul prepares itself to face God.

In his Pathway to God in Kannada Literature Ranade speaks of the moral preparation as an essential prerequisite to the final experience. He points out that one can make entry into the spiritual life by making oneself perfect in moral preparation, by utilising one's life in such a way that one might develop spiritually. The preparation involves controlling the senses by using them in the service of God, removing the weeds of egoism, removing the power of ignorance, uttering of God's name which is the first positive function of the tongue and employing tranquility and self-control, that are the crown of moral consciousness. This is achieved by the aid of one's teacher's instructions and one's own meritorious deeds.⁵⁵

The Buddha reveals the way of purity under the

55. Ranade (R.D.) : Pathway to God in Kannada Literature; pp. 47-55.

heads of conduct, concentration and wisdom. Conduct is the means of escape from the lower states of existence, concentration, the means of escape from the realm of sensual pleasure and wisdom is the means of escape from every form of existence. While treading the eight-fold Path the seeker proceeds along successive stages to perfection and this he does by overcoming various obstacles — selfishness, the illusion of the ego and the craving of self. Starting from a state of contemplation coupled with reflection he abandons all sin, desire and all feeling of joy, and goes beyond any notion of matter whatsoever. This leads him to the stage wherein there is neither consciousness nor unconsciousness so that he finally realises the complete disappearance of all feeling and notion. All this simply indicates the progressive abstraction of the seeker from the world of plurality and his ultimate release.

In Jainism the soul reaches perfection, Siddhahood by passing through fourteen stages of spiritual development. The first four stages are cognitive in their nature and aim at getting a clear and steady insight into the Truth, i.e. *Samyak-dristi*. There is no moral effort involved on the part of the individual in these stages. These stages could be compared to the vision of truth that the prisoner in the parable of the cave gets soon after

he comes out of the cave. From the fifth stage onwards the insight into the Truth is accompanied by moral effort.

These stages also imply definite moral efforts on the part of the individual in the way of practising virtue and developing self-control to fight against the force of Karma and against all emotional disturbances. In other words, what they imply is the casting away of the false attributes of the phenomenal self as a necessary condition for the attainment of the knowledge of truth. What they imply is a state of being completely passionless and calm, of being free from even the slightest passions as the promising soil for the growth of wisdom. The first stage in the scale of self-development is the *mithyadrsti*, a pervasivity of attitude after which the seeker passes through a mixed attitude of right and wrong belief and gradually reaches the stage of *sayogakevali* in which he becomes free from the bondage of Karma although not free from activity and bodily existence. This stage is akin to the stage of *Jivanamukta* wherein the liberated person still lives in the physical world. The next stage is the final stage of self-realisation, the stage of absolute perfection. However, absolute perfection in this case does not mean union with God; it is to attain perfection for oneself.

The Upanishads insist on introversion, abstinence from wrong-doing, humility, a life of penance and insight as the pre-requisites for spiritual life. The man desirous of immortal life, says the Kathaupanishad, has his eye turned towards. The ultimate realisation of the Self is supra-intellectual in character and, as the Isaupanishad tells us, neither discourse nor keen intellect can lead one to this realisation. Hence, the Mundaka lays stress on right insight as an essential qualification requisite for realisation. In other words, it is necessary that the aspirant is equipped with these moral virtues before he ascends the next step in the path of self-realisation.

"The fetter of the heart is broken,
all doubts are solved, all his works
(and their effects) perish when He
has been beheld who is high and low
(cause and effect). In the highest
golden sheath there is the Brahman
without passions and without parts.
That is pure, that is the light of
lights, that is it which they know
who know the Self."⁵⁶

The Gita talks of different types of renunciation and of three principal ways of reaching the ideal. First,

56. Mundaka-Up: II, 8, 9.



Sankhyayoga which emphasises Jñāna or knowledge as the way to realisation which is the attainment of the pure nature of Pūrṇa. It does not give prominence to activity or karma of the body and mind. All objects are unreal like the water in a mirage in so far as they are the creation of a dream, guṇas which are themselves the products of Māyā.⁵⁷ The Second way is the way of Karmayoga which upholds that all work should be done for the sake of God without any regard to the desire for fruit, because everything belongs to God. The aspirant must surrender to God with utmost faith and reverence — surrender to Him through body and mind and constantly meditate on Him.⁵⁸ The third way is the Bhakti marga which is the devotional surrender to God. It lays emphasis on man's emotional side, as emotion expresses a living relation between God and man. It is this relation that releases man from the bondage of egoism and leads him to the perception of the supreme.⁵⁹

However, the result of all these practices is one although they are different according to the qualifications of the seekers during their period of practice. What prepares the soul for the ordeal is the yoga system,

57. The Bhagavadgītā; Ch. V; vv; 8,9.

58. Ibid. Ch. V, v; 10.

59. Radhakrishnan (S.): Indian Philosophy. Vol. I; p.558.

which is a means of mental training, a discipline that lifts the personality into a supra-normal attitude. It implies purification of mind and body, withdrawal of the consciousness from the thoughts concerning everything other than the Real and thereby leads to the ultimate identification with the Real.

Viraseivism has for itself liberation of the soul from the bonds of empirical life and the consequent oneness with the Universal Consciousness as the ultimate goal. The soul is entangled in the Samsara, the cause of which is avidyā. What is necessary is a continuous moral effort to gain freedom from it. But then this freedom does not lie either in discarding the empirical life or in transcending it but in spiritualising it.

Satsthala, with its six stages, is the pathway to self realisation. The stages are : Bhaktasthala, the stage of a devotee, Mahasthala, the stage of confidence in spiritual realisation, Prasadiethala, the stage of a higher individual, Pranalingiethala, the stage of a lesser divinity, Saranasthala, the stage of a purified soul and Aikyasthala, the stage of union. These stages reveal the spiritual development of the individual, his gradual success corresponding to the efforts made by him in transcending the limitation of individual consciousness and

his ultimate union with the Absolute.

Ibn Sina gives five stages of development in the ladder of perfection which accomplishes the most urgent task of breaking the ties of attachment to the empirical self. Everything, he believes, longs for perfection which is its well-being, but everything is not capable of receiving the divine revelation, because everything is under the sway of matter, the greatest obstruction in the way to the Divine Glory. The obstruction must be removed and it is removed by disciplining the soul, by moulding it and by spiritualizing it to see the truth.

The aspirant first disciplines his soul through faith, which is certainty as to the way and directs it towards God. He then engages his self-discipline in removing all that is other than God, subduing his carnal soul to his rational soul. As soon as the soul becomes free from the sensual appetites and fills itself with good thoughts, by giving itself up to the spiritual love, it enters the third stage wherein flashes of the Divine Light appear to the aspirant, the so called ecstatic states that bring joy to him. In the next stage he sees God in all things and finally rises to the fifth stage wherein he becomes accustomed to God's Presence and contemplates God in Himself, his own innermost soul being a polished mirror reflecting the face of God.

Rūmī says God is Pure Good in Himself and He dwells nowhere but in pure soul. Purity is turning oneself away from all that is not Pure Good and set one's heart so entirely on the Pure Good that nothing besides the Pure Good is a comfort to the soul, nothing besides the Pure Good is an object of desire to the soul. And the soul hardly beholds anything creaturely, except so far as it beholds nothing but Pure Good therein, because it cannot bear anything that comes between itself and Pure Good, between itself and God.

This grace of knowing comes through faith and abstraction, through mortification. God is reached through contemplation and mortification paves the way for contemplation. Gnosis is not acquired by human learning, says Clement of Alexandria, but by mortification and contempt of the world which implies a life of self conquest and of contemplation. Rūmī repeats his words when he says, self-mortification is the only real pilgrimage. The soul is bound to the body, says Ramanuja, by the power of māyā. But God is the cause of bondage, as he is of liberation, because māyā belongs to God Himself just as liberation does. This he believes, is God's wisdom, jñāna and His will, sankalpa. It is a divine game of which God Himself does not derive any benefit. And what is the final result of this game? It

is perfect bliss that follows liberation. It is the intense happiness of union with an absolute perfect being, who also loves the soul with a consuming passion.

"The formal Pilgrimage consists in visiting the House of God, but only the Pilgrimage to the Lord of the House is worthy of a true man."⁶⁰

VII The process of purgation is a long and painful process and the seeker pays the full price in anguish and despair. Truth can be found only by single-minded devotion to it without any trace of self-interest and by indifference to all attachments of life. And this involves self-suffering. As Gandhi puts it, God is reached by reducing oneself to zero. And what is to reduce oneself to zero? It is, he says, "to be last in receiving good things, to serve every one, not to expect gratitude and to be the first in suffering."⁶¹

Rumi illustrates the path of self-discipline by reference to the boiling of the chick-pea in the pot by the house-wife, and compares the agitation of the seeker

60. The Mathnawi. Vol. IV; 15.

حج زیارت کردن خانه بود :: حج رب البيت مردانه بود

61. Gandhi (M.K.) : The Supreme Power; p.61.

to the restlessness of the chick-peas in the boiling pot.⁶² The house-wife, here, is the spiritual guide, the chick-pea, the disciple and the fire, the path of discipline the whole example symbolising the spiritual evolution by which everything ascends to the One Reality. The chick-pea is cooked, eaten and assimilated to the end that it loses its vegetable nature and participates in the animal nature in man, gradually ascends to rationality and finally returns to the realm of Divine Attributes whence it came. The chick-pea is boiled, says Rūmī, not because it is hateful to the housewife, but because the housewife wishes it to gain taste and savour, to become nutriment and mingle with the vital spirit thereof.

Pain is a means of nearness to God. Man is chained to the body, and so long as he is thus chained he cannot enter God's abode; so long as he does not experience pain of separation from God, he remains ever negligent of efforts. It is pain that dispels the illusion of perfection in man by awakening in him the sense of his own imperfection and thereby creating a longing for perfection. As Rūmī points out, the more wakeful you are, the more you suffer and the more ardent

62. The Mathnawī. Vol. III; 4159-4164.

is your love that concurs you. Then and then only you reach God and penetrate into His mysteries.

The spiritual heights are reached only after passing through sorrow, which gives impetus to his spiritual development.⁶³ It bespeaks the need for a higher life and compels him to make new and more satisfactory adjustment to the conditions of that life. Without it man would just continue to dwell at the same low level of existence. If at all it deprives man of anything it is of happiness in this world, the happiness of a low order; otherwise it serves the divine purpose by opening new avenues to a more lasting happiness on a higher plane.

Pleasure is fleeting. The consequence of self-indulgence is either pain or else the emergence of a fresh desire that sets up a new tension. As a matter of fact, one cannot be happy when one is under the sway of pleasure and pain. The moments of pleasure that is derived from the satisfaction of a desire cannot be called happiness, for as it is said, happiness eludes the pleasure seeker. One who desires it seldom finds it

63. Mir Valiuddin : The Problem of Fear and Sorrow: The Presidential Address, Indian Philosophical Congress: 38th Session, Dec. 1964, p.5.

and strongly enough one who ceases to desire it finds it.

The way to happiness, therefore, lies not so much in the satisfaction of every desire as in the release from the bondage of desire. But desire is not in itself evil. It becomes evil when it conflicts with the Divine Will and prevents man from accepting whatever happens to him as good. What is necessary is not its extinction but its harmony with the Divine Will. And once it is brought into accord with the Divine Will the individual will is merged in the cosmic will and his desire and God's will are at one. Pleasure and pain both are welcome to him and he dislikes nothing that happens to him, as his is the happiness that attends resignation. It is the happiness that follows the realization that nothing can happen unless God wills it and that God's will never causes any harm to anyone. It is this conviction and this unshakable faith in God's compassion that enables him to accept even His wrath as the mask of His Mercy without any feeling of discontent and resentment, without a single doubt that God is unjust and cruel. To grumble and lament his fate and to hold God responsible for his own suffering, therefore, is not like him. His wrath is as beneficial to him as His Mercy, and it is his sorrow that expiates his sin and elevates his soul. "Often you dislike something that happens to you, says the Qurān, "but it may be that therein



lies abundance of good for you". In the hour of grief the only abode of refuge is God.

Looked at from this angle sorrow is a boon and a blessing, the means that God employs for exalting man to a higher life. It is not a torment to the soul but God's own promise of man's spiritual development. Sorrow visits both the sinful and the righteous. But it is for the righteous alone that it serves the higher purpose of raising them to a higher spiritual plane. The spiritual development of man has no end, so that when he has attained to a high stage, he aspires to a still higher one. "For this reason" says Rūmi, "the tribulations and abasement laid upon the prophets is greater than that laid upon all other creatures in the world."⁶⁴ And did not God Himself say in the Qurān "We shall raise ye from plane to higher plane?"

Here is Rūmi again as a poet describing sorrow and the sufferer in his own way. Sorrow is a Divine Grace, a token of God's love which must be welcome as a mark of Divine Providence and Wisdom, a gracious light that shows the way to God and a treasure that holds within itself the

64. The Mathnawi. Vol. IV; 100.

بین سبب برانبارغ و شکست. ∴ ارحمه خلق جهان افزون ترست

kernel of invaluable mercies. And who is the sufferer? He is the true lover of God, who seeks in the Beloved the bitter rather than the sweet, grief and affliction rather than solace. His tears and heartfelt supplication are the sign and promise of spiritual joy, also the very source of confidence in him that he will reach his goal sooner or later, as he knows that when God loves His creatures He bestows upon them much sorrow. In a word, the sufferer is the one who has caught the scent of God, the true champion who has conquered himself and consequently the one who feels joy at the coming of sorrow. "Pleasure is a froil like a dew-drop," writes Rabindrenath Tagore; while it laughs it dies. But sorrow is strong and abiding. Let sorrowful love make in your eyes."⁶⁵ Gandhi agrees with Tagore:

" Misery so called is no misery,
 No riches so called riches,
 Forgetting (or denying) God is
 the true misery,
 Remembering (or faith in) God
 is true riches."⁶⁶

And Rumi anticipates their words:

" O brother, to dwell in a dark

65. Tagore : The Gardener; p.27.

66. Gandhi (M.K.): The Supreme Power; p. 212.

and cold place, to endure patiently sorrow and weakness and pain in the fountain of Life and the cup of spiritual intoxication, for those heights are all in lowliness."⁶⁷

The trials of purification sent by God are, therefore, a blessing in disguise. Divine Love does not manifest itself till the heart becomes the recipient of the Divine knowledge and mysteries. The tablet of the heart that is soiled with undesirable is washed by the tribulations of discipline. On the white tablet, then, God writes His own knowledge and mysteries. In the words of Rūmī, God turns the heart into blood and tears; but then he says:

"At the time of washing the tablet of the heart one must recognise that it will be made into a book of mysteries."⁶⁸

VIII The seeker now enters the stage of Tawakkūl, Trust in God. Tawakkūl is the capacity for faith, knowledge

67. The Mathnawī, Vol. II; 2262-63.

ای برادر صوفی تاریک و سرد :: صبر کن بدغم و سستی و درد
چشمه حیوان و جام مستی است :: همان بلند پیاغم در پستی است

68. Ibid. Vol. II; 1829.

وقت نشستن لوح را باید نشاءت :: که مرا آن را دقتری فواغند ساءت

and love which God has deposited in the human heart. And what the process of purgation has achieved is the enkindling of this spark and the fostering of its development to maturity whereby the spiritual end is reached. Tawakkūl involves the renunciation of all personal will and initiative, total self-abandonment with perfect indifference to all that is connected with one's own self and complete withdrawal from all that is other than God. To use Nicholson's words, "it is an habitual state of mind which is impaired only by self-pleasing thoughts."⁶⁹

In other words, Tawakkūl involves absolute passivity to the Divine Will. The seeker is now free, free from himself, from the world and from the evil consequences of worldliness, so much so that he is no more in need of his own faculties to pursue God. The believer's heart is between the two fingers of God and He turns it wheresoever He chooses. "I am in God's good hands," says Gandhi, "I shall wish neither one way nor the other"⁷⁰ Rūmī puts the same thing in his own way:

" My heart is as a pen in thy hand,
Thou art the cause if I am glad

69. Nicholson: The Mystics of Islam; p.44.

70. Gandhi : The Supreme Power; p.88.

or melancholy."⁷¹

Here the question arises how far is Tawakkūl compatible with any personal initiative or *jahd*? There is the opinion that the true *mūṭawakkil* should not make any effort, direct or indirect, to obtain the means of subsistence, or admit the thought of providing for the morrow. He must leave all to God and solely depend on God who knows the needs and demands of all and sends the daily bread to all.

Rūmī, however, does not agree with this view. He believes that faith and reliance on Divine Providence imply active exertion on the part of the *mūṭawakkil*. In a dialogue between the lion and the beasts he emphasises the point that active exertion for the purpose of obtaining the means of livelihood is quite compatible with *tawakkūl*, and says that one must, as the Prophet said, 'Trust in God and tie the camel's leg.' True *Tawakkūl* is marred by any self-pleasing thought or action. Consequently, it is only when one is inspired by selfishness that one is liable to punishment like the lion in the fable.

71. Nicholson (R.A.): Selected Poems from the Divān-i-Ishraq-i-Tabriz; XXX, 2.

Everything in the universe understands and implicitly obeys the Divine Word. It is man alone that hesitates between obedience and disobedience, endowed as he is with freedom of choice. Nevertheless, Rūmī says, he can strive for himself, and yet, have complete trust in God; he can choose, and yet, obey God, for both his vacillation and his choice are decreed and created by God Himself.⁷² God has a prior claim to man's faithfulness, and man's faithfulness to anyone besides God accompanied by the denial of God is nothing but sheer unfaithfulness. As Gandhi says: "For those who have faith in God, life and death are alike. Ours is to serve till the last breath."⁷³ And as Rūmī says:

"I am an infidel if anyone has
suffered loss a single moment
while walking in the way of
faith and obedience."⁷⁴

IX The purified heart of the traveller now receives in store all the spiritual provisions needed for his further journey and he enters the stage of contemplation thorough. The ground of real self, the infinite Sea

72. The Mathnawi. Vol. I; 1457.

ما که محبوبش اندر دگمان : کان کنم کو گنت یا فرد صدمان

73. Gandhi (M.E.): The Supreme Power; p. 88.

74. The Mathnawi. Vol. I; 977.

حامی من گریزان کردست کسی : در ره ایمان و طاعت یک نفس



of mystic knowledge lies within oneself, and is found by looking within oneself, by silently contemplating the deep.

The awareness of the Absolute is supplemented by an educative process that brings about the gradual development of faculty of concentration which is the power of spiritual attention. It is contemplation. Contemplation is "a mental attitude under which all things give up to us the secret of their life."⁷⁵ It means that withdrawal of attention from the external world which releases the faculty of apprehending the Real. Emotion, thought and will are fused, and there is a concentration of all faculties on one's self. Contemplation establishes communion between the soul and the Absolute, breaking down the barriers between the surface self and the deeper levels of personality where God is found and known.

Contemplation lies at the root of all our spiritual satisfactions. It is an act, not of reason, but of the whole personality working under mystic's love. It is a psychological state in which the field of consciousness is greatly contracted, the whole self being sharply concentrated upon one thing. When contemplation appears it

75. Underhill : 'Mysticism'; p. 301.

brings with itself the condition of indifference and peace. The subject is raised above himself wherein the consciousness of I-hood and the consciousness of the world disappear. He becomes conscious of his immediate relation with Absolute, where knowing is being, where he is what he knows. He knows himself to be real, and therefore he knows the Real.

In other words, Contemplation is a state of mind in which everything in the nature of sense-perception and intellectual operation is excluded, everything known by sense and intellect left behind, so that the mind becomes absolutely free from all occupations and distractions and sets to unite itself around God. It is seeing with the inward eye, a concentration of attention on the Divine Object in such a manner that there is an integration of the whole personality around the object and the subject is in a way transformed into the Divine Object itself. As Ghazālī puts it, Meditation, *murāqabā*, is the attentive apprehension or *mūlāhazā*, as he calls it, of the Omnipresence of God. It is a state of introversion in which the heart listens to the Voice of God, and is so preoccupied with Him that all the thoughts are directed towards Him.⁷⁶ He distinguishes three types of contempla-

76. Margaret Smith : Al Ghazālī, the Mystic; p.169.



tion. Contemplation bil-Haqq, which is the vision of things witnessing to the Unity, Contemplation, lit-Haqq which is the vision of God in things and contemplation of God Himself, which is the vision of Reality which is certain and beyond all doubt.⁷⁷

The Jainas give a similar classification of Dhyāna which they define as "the concentration of the thought on a particular object."⁷⁸ This concentration may be for an evil or for a good purpose. The first category is classified into two types — Arta-dhyāna, mournful concentration, which occurs when the mind contemplates upon one's lost object or unsatisfied desires and Roudra-dhyāna, crude concentration which occurs when the mind contemplates upon taking revenge. These two types of concentration are concerned with the fall of man. The second category of dhyāna also is classified into two types : Dharma-dhyāna which has four objects of the immaculate nature of the revelation, ajna, universal suffering, apāya, the nature of the fruition, vipaka of karma and the structure, samsthāna of the universe and Śukla-dhyāna which is the attainment of omniscience. The field of concentration shrinks to an atom, and the mind becomes

77. Ibid. p. 171.

78. Patil : Studies in Jaina Philosophy: p. 282.

steady and motionless, all its functions having been annihilated. It is these two types of dhyāna that are concerned with the progress of man.⁷⁹

For the Buddha Dhyāna was the persistent endeavour to bring the mind into harmony with all that is, an effort to be lost in truth. It was, therefore, the highest contemplation, and the only true prayer. "Arjuna" says the Gītā, "he who with his mind established in yoga in the form of practice of meditation, and thinking of nothing else, is constantly engaged in contemplation of God attains the supreme divine Pūrūṣa (God)."⁸⁰ Rūmī says the same thing in his own way:

"Close thy lips and gaze on the depth
of the Sea within thee : God made the
sea subject to man." ⁸¹

The mind that contemplates is the mind that is still. In seeking to the still the first step of necessity is the exclusion of all disturbances and emotions from within the without and the eradication of the natural

79. Ibid. pp. 281, 283 and 291.

80. The Bhagavadgītā; Ch. VIII; v; 8.

81. The Mathnawi. Vol. I; 3558.

لے بند و کور دریا بی نگر .. محراق کرد محکوم بشر

impulse to flee from the Divine Presence to the multitude of distractions. These must be resolutely controlled if one is to be blessed by the consciousness of nearness to God. The way to achieve this is self-control which is a deliberate act of attention to one's own highest conceptions, to one's own pure self, to the spirit of God.

This emphasis on the necessity of restraining the restless and fidgety mind is found in the Gītā which tells us that unless the mind is perfectly calm and passion is subdued, one cannot be identical with Brahman and enjoy the supreme happiness.

"He who has not controlled his mind and senses can have no determinate reason, nor can such an undisciplined man have belief in God. The unbelieving man can have no peace; and how can be happiness for one lacking peace of mind?"⁸²

Buddhism gives a similar conception. It teaches that man can attain to Nirvāṇa in this life only, provided he stands on proper foundation and develops the five psychic organs of faith, attentiveness, indomitable energy, concentration of good thoughts and wisdom. He must develop

82. The Bhagavadgītā; Ch. II; v. 66.

the seven attributes of supreme wisdom too, and exert strenuously, be cheerful, serene, practise the power of concentration and show a spirit of loving equanimity for all living beings. Thus prepared he is entitled to walk in the Eight-Fold Path which leads to the goal of Nirvāṇa.

In other words, Buddhism gives paramount importance to concentration as a means of eradicating desire, and consequently, as the most useful step towards arhatship. Concentration brings all good thoughts into a focus, so that one who practises concentration becomes inaccessible to sensuality and its evil consequence. In one word, concentration is an intenseness of meritorious thoughts, whereby the aspirant is made fit for higher exercises, the contemplation of the Truths.

Contemplation is accompanied by Zikr or Recollection which is the remembering and commemorating of God. It is repeating the name of God or some religious formula with such an intense concentration of each and every faculty upon the name or formula that all external impressions conveyed by sense or imagination are destroyed and a state of mindlessness ensues. There prevails the internal calm and peace of mind with no conscious reflection; and there prevails complete tranquillity and self-possession

with no turmoil of passions and prejudices. All this is followed by an absorption of the seeker's whole being in the thought of God, and he gains insight and the knowledge of Divine Unity thereof.

Zikr may be either silent or spoken. The heart of the seeker is reduced to a state in which the existence of anything and its non-existence are the same to him, for nothing save God enters his mind. The repetition of the word or phrase is continued till the action of his tongue ceases and it seems as though the word flows from it, and till the form of the word, its letters and shape are removed from his heart, and there remains the idea alone.⁸³

Ghazzālī holds that Recollection is acquired by three stages : recollection by the tongue, recollection by the heart and recollection which takes complete possession of the heart and prevails over it. By meditation the soul knows the joy of entering into the Presence of God. It then seeks the practice of the Presence of God at all times, which is Recollection. And Recollection is the most excellent of all occupations, for by it the heart is enlightened and is enabled to contemplate God. Godliness is the way to this recollection, which in turn is the way to revelation; and this is the way to the ultimate goal.⁸⁴

83. Nicholson : The Mystics of Islam; p.47.

84. Smith Margaret : Ghazzālī, the Mystic; pp.170-71.

The Gītā gives the technique identical with the Sufi Zikr the only difference between the two being that the object of meditation in the Gītā is the Self. It talks of self-realisation, wherein one sees all things in the Self and the Self in all things. The Indian practice of inhaling and exhaling was known to the sufis of the ninth century. Music, singing and dancing were also practised in order to induce the state of trance, of passing away, *fanā*.

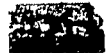
In one word, Zikr is a definite psychic condition bearing logical psychic results. The meditation upon certain aspects of the real results in the control of the will over the understanding, with the consequent break of connection with the external world and retreat into the inner world of the spirit. Says Iṣṣāq:

"Do not put musk on your body, rub it on your heart. What is musk? The holy name of the Glorious God."⁸⁵

Of this musk, *samā*, the whirling dance forms a part too, because *samā* ultimately leads to the state of ecstasy.

85. The Mathnawi. Vol. II; 267.

مُسک و برقع مزین بر دل مال : مُسکِ چه بود نام پاکِ ذوالجلال



Thus what restores to man his original nature is contemplation, contemplation that causes in him true affinity to the divine. Man regains his angelic knowledge, says St. Thomas Aquinas, through contemplation. Adam possessed this knowledge of God before his fall, and we receive the same as the gift of the Holy Ghost through contemplation. Clement of Alexandria repeats these words, when he says that the soul was made in the image of God and that the divine image is sealed upon it in contemplation.

And what is the hour of true contemplation? Rumi says, it is the pure heart that is perfumed with praise of God. The soul in contemplation is absolutely free, out of itself and out of all things, dwelling in the heart of the Divine Beloved, stripped of all and lost for all. It views everything from afar off, everything having been made subject to it. In the intense practice of contemplation all disappears except the object of contemplation. One is what one is conscious of, and in the one-pointed meditation even the subject himself ceases exist, so that, it is not that he is left with nothing but God, but that, he is God. He transcends all space, time and causation, and realizes that there exists nothing except God. Once he realizes this, he realizes that God is in all things too. He can think of

nothing but God; he can love nothing but God. He sees everything in God so much so that, if at all he sees himself, he sees himself in God.

"Within thy soul a soul doth dwell:

Go, seek it well!

Within thy mountain is a mine!

Get it for thine

The Sufi seek as he doth go

I thou canst so;

Search not for him thy self apart,

But search thy heart."⁸⁶

86. Arberry (A.J.) : The Rubaiyat of Jalal al-Din Rumi; p. 21.

CHAPTER XITHE UNION

I. In the mystical resurrection there is the ascension of the soul to the ultimate realisation of inseparable union with God. This is the final victory of the soul, the end and aim of the mystic way and life and the culmination of the simplifying process through which the soul is detached from all that is other than God. All turmoil and all struggle has come to an end; the eye of the soul is opened and the soul is at rest in its 'beatific vision' of God 'as He is'. It has attained to the ultimate overwhelming experience of God through its communion with God. In this union God knows Himself without medium and sees Himself without medium so that He is both the thing seen and the means by which He is seen.

Contemplation of God leads to Fanā, Self-annihilation, which is the consummation towards which the soul's endeavours have all along moved. What is Fanā? Fanā is the extinction of self, the disappearance of the individual in the universal. It is dying to self, the seeker's passing away from the thought of God in the object of thought, through his absorption in the object of thought. Union with God is immortality, and Fanā is

that immortality.

Man is only a fleeting reflexion, a finite node of the Infinite, the all pervading Divine Personality God. But so long as man retains something of his own nature, there can be no effacement in God, and so long as he does not efface himself in God entirely, there can be no encounter with God. And how is this effacement made possible? To use Rūmī's own words:

"By digging for yourself a grave in spiritual purity and burying your egoism in His egoism, and by becoming His dust and buried in love of Him, so that your breath may gain replenishment from His breath."¹

Fanā is that grave in which the seeker buries his egoism, his consciousness, in fact, his very existence. In other words, Fanā is non-individuality. It is non-existence, the shedding of one's own limited existence, the phenomenal self, and the subsequent merging in the spiritual whole, the Universal Self. This is brought about by the moral, intellectual and spiritual transformation of the soul through the extinction of the unreal

1. The Mathnawi. Vol. III, 131-32.

ہمک خود را در صفا گورے کنی :: در منی او کی دنی منی
 خاک اگردی و صفوں غمش :: تادمت یا یہ صدمہ طراز مش

self, its desires, passions and prejudices and through the mental abstraction from the world of matter with its innumerable attachments, accompanied by an intense contemplation of God. What follows is the complete cessation of all conscious thought and existence, even the very consciousness of having attained Fanā. This is the highest stage of Fanā, "Fanā-al-Fanā" "Passing away of passing away" as it is called, that constitutes the highest level of contemplative life, the very end and goal of it.

Rūmī illustrates this point with the help of a story. A man knocked at his friend's door. When the friend asked from within who he was, he replied "I am I". The friend refused to open the door saying, "I do not know any friend who is 'I'". The Man returned after a year and knocked again. 'Who is it?' asked the friend: 'I am you' replied he this time, whereupon the friend opened the door saying: "Now, since thou art I, come in, O myself; there is no room in this house for two I's"²

In the like manner one who utters 'I' and 'No'

2. Ibid. Vol. 1; 3063.

گفت اکنون چون منی ای من درآ : نیست گنجای درمن را در مرا

is turned back from the door of the Divine Court. It is the dead alone that enter the Sea of Divine Consciousness, because it is the dead body that floats on the surface of water; the living is consumed by its wrath and is made naught. In the words of Rūmī: One who says 'I' is conscious of his own existence besides God's and is deluded by duality. One who says 'ana'l-abī', 'I am the slave of God' is deluded too as he affirms two existences, His own and God's own, for 'I' is the most presumptuous claim that bars one's way to the ultimate union.

St. John of the cross gives a similar conception when he talks of the experience of union as the result of the emptying of the self of all its empirical contents. The mind is emptied of all physical sensations; the memory has lost its power; the understanding is unable to comprehend anything and the will too is in darkness. The inward wisdom cannot enter into the understanding in any conceptual form or sensory image and the soul "feels as though it has been placed in a vast and profound solitude, in an immense and boundless desert."³ Eckhart refers to this negative side of the experience when he talks of 'barren desert', which is similar to the 'Void' of the

3. Stace (E.T.) : The Teachings of the Mystics; p.186.

Buddhists and to the 'Void' of Virasaivism, 'Dayalū', as it is called, which is the liberation of the soul from the bonds of empirical life.

Jñāni likewise admits that union is the result of making the heart single and purifying it from attachment to anything except God. It is the realization that any appearance besides God is false. All desire and will and all objects of knowledge and understanding are removed from the intellectual vision of the mystic. There is no 'otherness' beside God and there is no will, thought or action that can be referred to one's self.⁴

The purpose of self-negation is to clear the way for the apprehension of the fact that there is no existence save that of God. "I am naught" means 'God is all'. True lover is he who is so transformed into the Beloved that there remains only the Beloved, he himself being naught. He has no initiative and no movement, like the fly plunged in honey with no capacity to move, its whole body having been reduced to the condition of inactivity; or rather, he is like the drowning man who has ceased struggling, because he who struggles is certainly conscious of the fact that he is drowning and is not in the

4. Nicholson (R.A.) : The Mystics of Islam; p.83.



state of absorption.⁵

As such, whatever he does proceeds directly from God, just as the harmony of the flute proceeds from the musician, and just as the words coming from the wall proceed from someone who has brought the wall into speech. All his senses become a unity, no member seeking freedom of action, no member seeking a share of its own, all seeing united and all immersed in the One. And what does he behold? He beholds the Lord with the eye of the Lord seeing through Him, hearing through Him and speaking through Him.

This is the supreme annihilation, the ultimate return of the soul to the Unity. This is ripeness, and this is the hour, the only right hour to cry 'ana'l-Haqq', 'I am God', the sublime words that are the evidence of the greatest humility. What they repeatedly affirm is the existence of God and of God alone, for 'ana'l-Haqq means 'I am naught, He is all'; there is no being but God's. Says Rūmī:

"To say "I" out of the proper time is
a curse to the speaker; to say that
'I' at the proper time is a mercy from
God. The 'I' of Mansūr (Hallāj)

5. Arberry (A.J.) : Discourses of Rūmī; p.84.

certainly became a mercy; the 'I' of Pharaoh became a curse."⁶

This hour of union is the second birth of the lover, holding within itself communion with the Beloved. It is the release of the soul, the spiritual resurrection whereby the soul casts off its phenomenal nature and breaks through to the Oneness. It no longer belongs to the world of illusion, and is beyond the approach of time, as it has returned to its original state of potential existence in God's consciousness, and has realized the unity of the Divine Essence, Attributes and actions. The veil has been removed and nothing is visible, neither the sky, nor the stars, nor anything else, but God everywhere.

The ecstatic utterances made by the mystic in *fana* are merely an echo, as he is an unconscious organ through which the Divine Knowledge is conveyed. He is entirely unaware of these utterances, as ignorant as the mountain that knew nothing of the Divine words it echoed to Moses.⁷ And yet his expressions do not convey the real knowledge of God which can be gained only through

6. The Mathnawi, Vol. II; 2522-23.

آن تا بوقت گفتن لغت است :: آن تا در وقت گفتن لغت
آن تا منور رحمت شد تبیین :: آن تا فرعون لغت شد تبیین

7. Ibid. Vol. I; 128-30.



immediate experience. As a matter of fact, their sole purpose is to disguise the Divine mystery and guard it from persons unfit for it.

"Sing, like nightingales, in the presence of the Rose, in order that you may divert them from the scent of the Rose, so that their ears will be engaged in (listening to) the song, and their attention will not fly to the face of the Rose."⁸

Setting is not injurious to the Sun or the moon; it is to the world that they rise and set. Likewise Fanā is not the ruin of the soul; it is destructive only when it is viewed from the phenomenal aspect of existence. And when the phenomenal aspect is cut short, what flourishes is the Unity. The lover is no more; he has lost himself to the Beloved and by losing himself he has found himself. It is not 'I', says St. Paul, 'but Christ that lives in me'. And did not Christ himself say that in order to obtain one's life one must lose it; in order to enter the kingdom of heaven one must be born again. Rūmī talks of the same state when he says:

8. Ibid. Vol. VI; 700-701.

بیا نه نعره زن در روی گل :: تا کنی مشغول شان از روی گل
تا بقل مشغول گردد گوش نشی :: سوی روی گل نبرد و درش شان

"I found true individuality in non-individuality : therefore I wove my individuality into non-individuality."⁹

All this, however, does not mean that in the ultimate absorption of the self in God what occurs is a complete destruction of the whole personality. For Rūmī Fanā does not involve the loss of anything that is really essential and of value in personality, although it seems to imply a certain loss of personality as a merging of it in the absolute. That is because fanā is not at all a negative conception. Its complement is Baqā subsistence in God, the positive state in which the essence of the seeker has an abiding life in God.

The self is a substance and as such cannot be annihilated in something else. All that can be annihilated is the imperfection of the self and the consciousness of the unreal world; and this is precisely what Fanā achieves, the destruction of all imperfection. Fanā is the annihilation of the false individual attributes but not of the individual essence. Baqā is the assuming of

9. Ibid. Vol. I: 1735.

من کسی درنا کسی دریافتم : پس کسی درنا کسی دریافتم

the attributes of God and living in Him without losing one's own individuality. There can be no identity between God and man, as they are entirely different in attributes as well as essence. In the ultimate union of the two the individual attributes are replaced by the Divine attributes; it is the individual essence that is destined to remain unchanged.

Rūmī explains this view-point by resorting to his favourite analogy of organism and says that the relation between the released soul and God is similar to the living relation of the part to the whole.¹⁰ The soul lives in God in spite of the fact that it is essentially different from Him, just as an organ lives through the whole organism, although it has an essence of its own. Everything can develop by becoming part of a higher organism. So also every individual can develop and attain immortality by becoming an organ in the Universal Divine Organism. God Cut away from Him it is as lifeless as a limb cut away from the body and even if it moves its movement is

10. Ibid. Vol. III; 1936-40.

جزو از کل قطع شد بجای کار شد. :: عضو از تن قطع شد مرد در شد
تا پیوند کل بار دیگر :: مرده باشد نبودش از جان صبر
در بجهنم نیست؟ آنرا خود سوز :: عضو از سریده هم جنبش کند
جزو از تن کل گر برود یکسوزد :: این نه آن کاست کلاه قص شود
قطع و وصل از نیاید در مثال :: چیز باقی نماند شد بهر مثال

like the movement of the newly severed limb. It must, therefore, be rejoined to its spiritual whole, if at all it is to regain its consciousness of life, if at all it is to attain perfection and immortality.

"When thou hast become living through Him, that (which thou hast become) is in sooth He: it is absolute Unity; how is it co-partnership?"¹¹

But then, Pīrī says, what he has given is only an analogy which is nothing more than a feeble attempt to explain what he calls the inexplorable. He repeatedly emphasises the point that analogies should not be stretched too far, as no analogy can explain an ultra-rational truth. The ultimate relation between the parts and the whole is ultra-rational too, transcending the categories of understanding, hence, cannot be explained by anything that is phenomenal. He therefore says:

"Seek the explanation of this in the mirror of (devotional) works, for thou wilt not gain the understanding of it from speech and discourse."¹²

11. Ibid. Vol. IV; 2767.

چون به وزده شدی آن خود دوست :: دردت کفایت آن شرکت کیست

12. Ibid. Vol. IV; 2768.

شرح این در آئینه اعمال جو :: که نیای بهم آن از گشت و گدو

Going forth from his own qualities the seeker enters the qualities of God; leaving his own will he enters the will of God. All the human qualities are changed and transcuted by the divine radiance that is shed upon him, and God speaks through the enraptured soul as He spoke through Hallāj. It was not Hallāj who cried 'Ana'l-Haq', but God Himself spoke through his selfless soul. As the sufi Gulshan Rāz observes, "Every man whose heart is no longer shaken by any doubt, knows with certainty that there is no being save only One In his divine majesty the we, the us, the thou are not found, for in the One there can be no distinction. Every being who is annulled and entirely separated from himself hears resound outside of him this voice and this echo: 'I am God' : he has an eternal way of existing, and is no longer subject to death."¹³

Thus immersed in unity the mystic maintains no relation between himself and the world. Nothing of himself is left in him that would compell him to follow any religion or to obey any law. All the dark thoughts of 'otherness' are expelled and the phenomenal values of all existing things are changed into their real and eternal value.

13. As quoted by James (William) : The Varieties of Religious Experience; p.420.

Contemplating the Essence of God and finding it identical with his own, the mystic transcends both space and time. In him God beholds Himself, praises Himself and knows Himself.

In other words, the passing away of the self is through transmutation rather than through annihilation, through the shedding of the unreal human attributes and subsisting in God clothed in the Divine attributes, like an ounce of vinegar in two hundred pounds of sugar, as Rumi puts it, or like the light of the candles and stars in the overwhelming light of the Sun. They exist and yet they do not exist. They exist because they are always there as substances and objects with their own separate essences. They do not exist because they have lost their luminosity, their attributes in the luminosity and attributes of the Sun.¹⁴

Thus overwhelmed by the Divine Presence and saturated with the attributes of God the soul plunges into a state of consciousness wherein it feels its identity with God. The iron in fire has lost its own colour and coldness, and has assumed the properties of fire. It has become like fire and it claims to be fire. Indeed

14. The Mathnawi. Vol. III; 3671-3675.

in that state, it is fire and it is not fire.¹⁵ The enraptured soul likewise denies that he is anything yet affirms that he is everything.

Union is not annihilation but transformation of the lower self into the higher self, wherein no destruction of the individual personality occurs. It is the identification of attributes, the purging of all phenomenal attributes and the subsequent regaining of one's own transcendental self. The Divine spirit is breathed into man and yet, there persists a difference between man and God, just as there persists a difference between man and man.

St. John of the Cross agrees with Rūmī. He holds that in the ultimate union the soul retains its own distinct nature just as a pure window, even when illumined by sunlight and transformed into sunlight, retains its individual nature. It becomes 'sunlight by participation';

15. Ibid. Vol. II: 1345-1350.

میرزا الله هست ختم رنگ طو : پسیمایک رنگ گرد اندر
 چون در آن ختم فند و گوییش تم : از لرب گوید منم ختم لا تلم
 ان منم ختم فند انا الحق گشت : رنگ آتش "الا آفت
 رنگ من بخور رنگ آتش است : رنگ آتش لا فند و فاشی و است
 یون سرفی گشت همچون زر کان : پس انا التارست لا شیبی زبان
 شد زر رنگ و لبع آتش محتم : گوید او من آتش من آتشم

So also the soul, that allows God to work in it, transform it and make it perfect, becomes God by participation. Getting rid of all that is repugnant to God, it attains a likeness to Him, and becomes almost indistinguishable from God. Union is the consummation of the soul's transformation in God.¹⁶ It is union, says Ghazālī, the reunion of the drop with the ocean whence it came forth and the reunion of the spark with the flame. Nevertheless, it is a union in which the part still subsists in the whole. Panū seems that the mystic has ceased to be self-conscious and has become God-conscious.¹⁷

Rūmī, therefore, describes union as the transformation of copper into gold. "Tis notorious that copper by alchemy becomes gold." He says, "Our copper has been transmuted by this rare alchemy."¹⁸ And who is the author of this rare alchemy? It is God Himself, who transforms the imperfect and raises it to perfection. The imperfect soul in turn clasps the Eternal Light, like the moth that clasps the candle, and the phenomenal being is transmuted into the real being of the Eternal Light.

16. Stace (W.T.) : The Teachings of the mystics: p.188.

17. Smith (Margaret) : Al Ghazālī, the Mystic: pp.233-34.

18. Nicholson (R.A.) : Selected Poems from the Divān-i-Shams-i-Tabriz: IV:7.

This is deification, the deified person existing only formally and externally. He has passed from annihilation to abiding existence and is no more subject to the law of mortality. As an individual he is non-existent; and if at all he exists it is in virtue of the Divine Life and energy. In one word he has attained to the state of Baqā, a state wherein no relapse is possible. In the words of Rūmī:

"There is no dervish in the world;
and if there be a dervish, that
dervish is really nonexistent.
He exists in respect of the sur-
vival of his essence, but his attribu-
tes have become non-existent in
the attributes of God."¹⁹

Exactly how this transformation is brought about in the soul it is hard to explain. The intellect cannot comprehend the reality of an ultra-rational truth, its knowledge of a thing being nothing more than a mere collection of its attributes. Existence for it is conditioned and limited; and in so far as what survives in God is only the essence, the attributes having been anni-

19. The Mathnawi. Vol. III; 3669-70.

گفتہ قابل در میان درویش نیست : و بود درویشی آن درویش نیست
مست از روی بقای ذات او : نیست گشته وصف او در وصف او

hilated, its apprehension is beyond the reach of the intellect.

There is an underlying Unity of all existence, wherein everything is divine and wherein everything is qualitatively, if not essentially, identical with everything else. The transformation of the soul is the unitary life of God is as unique as the transformation of matter in the life of the organism. Matter becomes living by participating in the life of the organism, and likewise the soul attains to perfection by participating in the life of the Spiritual Organism, God. Furthermore the Divine Unity and the plurality of souls are not inconsistent with each other just as the unity of the organism and the multiplicity of its constituent organs are not inconsistent with each other.

Rūal, therefore, likens the spiritual ascension of the soul to the ascension of the sugarcane to sugar. It is not the ascension of a mortal to the moon, but rather the ascension of vapour to the sky, of an embryo to rationality. On the *buraq* or not being, *fanā* the soul raises itself to the Eternal Being.²⁰

But Rājwiri believes that it is wrong to suppose

20. Ibid. Vol. IV: 552-55.

that fanā denotes loss of essence and that baqā means indwelling of God in man. Fanā is the annihilation of consciousness of man-hood, Ubūdiyyat, and baqā is the subsistence of the contemplation of God, ilāhiyyat. The sufi dies to the consciousness of his own imperfection, and perishing his will he lives in the will of God. He becomes subsistent through beholding the actions of God, and refers all his actions to God. But human attributes do not become divine attributes, nor do the divine attributes become human attributes. "The power of fire transforms to its own quality anything that falls into it, and surely the fire of God's will is greater than that of fire; yet fire affects only the quality of iron without changing its substance for iron can never become fire."²¹

Some identify deification with unification in their pantheistic theory. They maintain that man and God have never been separate for there is no real existence apart from God. Man, therefore, cannot be united with God; He is the reflection of God Himself. Individuality is, in fact, not-being. The eternal and the phenomenal says Ibn-al-Arabi, are the two complementary aspects of the One. Phenomena are the manifestation of

21. Nicholson (H.A) : The Mystics of Islam; p.159.

the One; and man is God's consciousness revealed in the Universe. But his capacity being limited he cannot think all objects of thought at the same time. As he reveals only a part of the divine consciousness, he cannot say 'I am God'.

For some *fana* is the non-cognizance of one's attributes as one's own. For others it is the disappearance of the *anāyyat*, the I-ness of the aspirant in the I-ness of God. Again, there are some to whom it means the transformation of the essence, the attributes and actions of the aspirant into the essence, attributes and actions of God.

Still others accept three degrees in *fana* : *Qurb-i-Farḥīd*, Proximity of obligations, *Qurb-i-Navāfil*, Proximity of super-erogations and *Jamā'baynā'l-Qurbayn*, the union of the two proximities. In the first stage the sufi is the instrument of God who acts through him. But in the second stage God Himself becomes an instrument in the hands of the sufi. It is in the third stage that the sufi becomes one with the Essence of God.²²

As against these foregoing conceptions Indian Thought postulates the concept of 'Liberation'. For

22. Subhan (John A.) : Sufism, its saints and shrines; p.84.

many Indian thinkers the ultimate aim is not union. It is liberation which is described either in relation to Brahman or in relation to God. Liberation is reaching the beyond, parama or the state beyond paramāthāna, that is the highest goal. It is an imperishable abode, the supreme success often described as what is pleasant, sukham or what is supremely pleasant and at other times as peace or cessation. The liberated soul experiences immortality as Brahman, knows God and participates in His life.

The Indian mysticism actually begins with this experience of the soul as immortal and as having its being outside time. The Yoga type of mysticism, for instance, has ^{for} itself the question of self-integration and self-realisation in which there is no union. It is the extrication of the eternal from all that is not eternal in the soul, the realisation of a single spiritual essence. So also in the Vedānta self-realisation is the soul's realisation of itself as the Absolute. The Sāṅkhya Yoga interpretes the same experience as the soul's enjoying its own individual eternity. In the final experience of liberation there is no destruction of the individual personality, as the Gītā holds, nor does man realise himself as God. On the contrary, what he realises is his own immortality, this realisation being the essential

pre-requisite to communion with God. What he attains is a divine mode of existence. But sharing a divine mode of existence is different from actually being God. As Ramanuja points out, the realisation of oneself as eternal is not the realisation of oneself as God; it is merely the essential first stage in which the soul sheds all its links with matter so that it is free for its encounter with God.

The soul is eternal and timeless of its own nature. It is a purely spiritual thing not susceptible to change, is indivisible and of the same substance as God. It is pure consciousness, its essence being knowledge and bliss. It is, therefore inherent in all men to realise this nature of one's immortal soul as being unconditioned by space and time, and to see all things in the soul and the soul in all things. This state is a god-like state.

But so long as the soul inhabits a body, its participation in the divine nature is not complete. Sankara says that the soul's connexion with the body is illusory, but in the Gita we find the view that this connexion is real. It is caused by God's māya. But this māya is not illusion, it is God's mode of operation in the material universe. The soul has been transmigrating from body to body from all pre-eternity and its link



with matter is covered only on liberation. It, then, enters a new form of existence, into the highest abode of God wherein all is pure consciousness and timeless bliss. This is the vision of the soul or the direct experience of the soul 'ātma-darsana' as it is called, in which the soul is aware of its own timeless substance. It enjoys the loneliness of self-illumination, the experience of oneself as a pure light beyond time and space, eternal and alone. Īśvarapranidhāna, meditation on the Lord is one of the means of attaining to this vision of being an eternal monad. This is Śiddhī, perfection or paramārthī, supreme perfection; and this is the supreme goal, 'paramanugama' the blissful state, or santi, quietude.²³

In Jainism there is no question of the soul's losing its identity in the higher being, as there is no room for a higher deity or God. The soul, of necessity, retains its individuality in the highest stage of ayoga-kevali, which is the stage of self-realisation, or absolute perfection.²⁴ The soul has an inherent capacity for this realisation. But the capacity is obstructed by

23. Yoga Sutra of Patañjali.

24. Kshatrigi (A.G.): Philosophical Quarterly (1963); p. 110.

the force of karma, which can be removed only through the triple path of right intuition, right knowledge and right action. The soul, then, enjoys the highest form of dhyāna, meditating on its own nature, and finally enters the state of para-brahma or Niranjana, the state of liberation.

Liberation is deliverance. It is Nirvāṇa, the complete freedom from bodily existence, from all action and desire. But Nirvāṇa is not annihilation of the soul. It is rather the soul's entry into a blessedness that has no end, a state of rest without change, of utter and absolute tranquility and of an ineffable peace. The past karma having been extinguished, the soul is no more re-embodied and has attained to the siddha state, that is absolutely unconditioned being neither the cause nor the effect of the samsara. Nirvāṇa, therefore, is freedom from body and not from existence. The delivered soul has an abiding existence as infinite consciousness, pure understanding, absolute freedom and eternal bliss.²⁵

Now does Nirvāṇa of Buddhism mean total annihilation. What it means is the annihilation of all that is individual in man, of that which is base in him, vicious

25. Radhakrishnan (S.) : Indian Philosophy. Vol. I; p.333.

in him. It is the final extinction of sorrow, following the destruction of desires, which would otherwise be the cause of renewed embodied existence.

In other words, Nirvāṇa is deliverance only from Karma and from earthly life. It is, in reality, the positive blessedness, that is the consummation of the spiritual struggle and the goal of perfection. It is the *summum bonum*, the culmination of all the virtues of charity, self-sacrifice, morality, enlightenment and truthfulness, whereby one enters into communion with the whole universe. This freedom is unconditioned freedom, a state of activity that is not subject to causality, transcending all subject-object relations, with no trace of self-consciousness whatsoever. Nonetheless, there is a strong sense of oneness with all that is, a sense of close affinity with all that is. Nirvāṇa, therefore, is far from being the dead peace of the grave, to use Gandhi's words.²⁶ It is the living peace and the living happiness of the soul. Having found a place in the Eternal, the soul has entered into a timeless existence full of peace, purity and happiness.²⁷

26. Gandhi (E.T.) : The Supreme Power; p.29.

27. Radhakrishnan (S.): Indian Philosophy; Vol. I; p. 448.



But some would like to interpret Nirvāṇa in its negative aspect. They consider it as heretical to think of a Tathāgata as existing eternally or not existing at all. It is also heretical to ask whether he is existing as well as not existing or whether he is neither existing nor non-existing. And for this reason one cannot say if Nirvāṇa is a positive state and eternal state, or a mere state of non-existence and annihilation.

With only these negative implications Nirvāṇa cannot be said to be akin to the sufi doctrine of fanā-wa-baqā. It is only when regarded in its positive aspect that one is reminded of the sufi doctrine that talks in terms of abiding existence as of annihilation.

Likewise the two phases of the doctrine of Mokṣa in the Upanishads may be said to be running parallel to the doctrine of fanā-wa-baqā. Mokṣa is the release of the individual from the bondage of the selfish and finite existence. It is the complete absorption in Brahman, Fanā, as the Muslim thinkers call it, wherein the soul is completely merged and indistinguishably lost in God. But then absorption in Brahman does not mean complete annihilation, but the preservation of conscious personality in subtle essence. This is the state of Baqā, the state of abiding life in God. The lump of salt dissolved

in water cannot be found again, but the water is salty everywhere. Such is the merging of the soul in Brahman. It vanishes away with no consciousness, and yet it exists.

The Svetāśvatara Upaniṣad and the Bhagavad Gītā talk of a personal God who is lower than the Impersonal Absolute in spite of the fact that they talk of Isvara who leads to isolation or 'brahmabhūya', the condition of Brahman, or pure existence. The Gītā further asserts that this God is a God of Love who is to be approached in humble devotion. Ramanuja, likewise, drew a distinction between God and Brahman or the Absolute which is the trans-temporal and trans-spatial mode of existence, and in which the soul has its being. The soul has this mode of existence in common with God.

It is Viśiṣṭaīvaṇ that talks of liberation as well as of union with the Ultimate Reality or Aikya. The self merges in the Absolute and partakes the nature of the Absolute, this realisation being the realisation of an identity of essence in spite of difference in existence. This is the final condition of liberation of the soul from the bonds of empirical life and the attainment of Śivatva which is also described as 'Bhayaṇ', the void. 28

28. Kelghatgi (T.S.): Philosophical Quarterly (1963); p.105.

There is, thus, a fundamental difference between the two schools of mysticism. The Muslim school believed that God alone is eternal, there being no other such being. The yoga system, on the other hand, allows for the existence of an infinite number of souls which are eternal and which transcend time and space, in addition to the existence of God. Moreover, the ultimate aim is not at all union with God as it is with the Muslim thinkers. It is rather to realise the eternity of the individual human soul. The final experience, therefore, is an experience of isolation, of separation of the eternal in man from the temporal. Sankara talks of the highest experience as one of totally undifferentiated oneness which is to be interpreted as the identity of one's own being with the ground of the universe.

However, the Muslim thinkers could not remain isolated for long from Indian thought. The Vedāntic ideas were introduced into Sufism via Abū Yaʿqūb of Bistām. He holds that the essence of the mystical approach to God is conforming oneself to the character of God, so that man becomes the instrument of God's will, wherein God becomes his ears by which he hears, his eyes by which he sees and his tongue by which he speaks. In this union man's personality is not destroyed. God displaces his personality and acts through him.

Similarly, Jūnayd of Baghdād defines tawhīd or union as the isolation of eternity from origination. It is the isolation or separation of two distinct and incompatible elements. The identification of soul with God is simply the first isolation of the soul, this isolation being a trap set by God for the soul. When this isolation is shattered, the soul enters into an I-thou relationship with God who overwhelms it. The soul's union with God is a unique relationship wherein even suffering is changed into joy.

Thus, although Islam starts with a conception of God, who is completely distinct from His creation, Sufism teaches that God can be experienced by those who wait upon His call with a loving heart. This ultimately leads to union with Him wherein the soul still retains some trace of individuality. The soul should be as it was, says Jūnayd talking of union, which, however, does not mean total extinction of the individual personality but a new life in and through God. Sufism, he maintains, means that God causes you to die to self and to live in him. As such, Fanā is the destruction of the creaturely life of the flesh and participation in the divine. On this way the soul is first chosen by God Himself. It is, then, emptied of self and isolated, so that it leaves the temporal world and enters into the eternal. Union, therefore,



is nothing but isolation or 'separation'. It is separation of God who is eternal from the universe.

Rūmī may be said to be speaking in terms of 'separation' in the sense that he too insists on the isolation of the soul from the bondage of empirical life. Moreover, he is a believer in the survival of individual personality even in the ultimate union, the union being of attributes rather than of essence. But in Rūmī there is no concept corresponding to the Brahman of Vedānta. His God is not the timeless Absolute but an active God who deals with men. He is the Eternal Beloved who draws the soul to Himself so that in the last phase of this love He says to the soul, 'Yā enā', 'O thou I'. To know God, therefore, is to love Him; without love there can be neither knowledge of Him nor communion with Him.

God is a concrete Unity embracing within Himself a plurality of essentially different yet divine souls.

His absolute Unity excludes all plurality and relations which are temporal categories not applicable to transcendental sphere. The Noumenal Realm which Rūmī calls 'Akāsh' is the Realm of ear, of Command or Will. It is unitary and beyond the phenomenal the will being an indivisible Noumenal Reality. But as soon as it enters the realm of speech and action this Noumenal Reality splits up into

multiplicity, and becomes accessible to the senses and the intellect.

In other words, God is the only Reality, all plurality being mere appearance. All souls are essentially identical with one another and with God in spite of the fact that they are differentiated temporarily through the phenomenal attributes. In the words of Rūmī, God is the Sea, the souls are the waves raised by the wind; God is the flame, the bodies of souls, lamps containing that flame; God is the Sun, and souls are the windows through which the sunbeams filter in.

It is this idealistic conception of the transcendental self of man that leads Rūmī to his conception of immortality. Man is not a part of phenomenal nature in which things arise, grow and decay. His real self belongs to the Noumenal Realm and is far from being a product of nature. It is, in reality, the very source of all nature, so much so that even his body and the universe are the products and reflections of this transcendental self of man.²⁹

Rūmī interprets the Prophet's ascension, *airāj*

29. The Mathnawī. Vol. I; 1811-12.

also in his own way and says that his ascension was not physical but psiritual. His physical ascension is an impossibility because after all, the heavens are not the abode of God. Ascension is to get rid of all limitation and to escape the bondage of earthly existence. It is to divest oneself of the attributes of one's own narrow individuality and enter the realm of the Eternal and Unmanifested. It is again to be glorified by the colour and nature of divinity and to be lit up with the light of God. And this is what the Prophet achieved, the nearness to God that is beyond calculation.

"To be nigh unto God is not to go up
or down: to be nigh unto God is to
escape from the prison of existence.
What room hath non-existence for
'up' and 'down'? Non-existence hath
no 'soon' or 'far' or 'late'. " 30

II However, Rūmī does describe the unitive life in terms of positive deflection as though union with God means actual identification with the Divine. God is all and all is God. And in the undifferentiated experience

30. Ibid. Vol. III; 4514-15.

قرب نه بالانه پستی رفتست : قرب حق از جسی پستی رفتی است
نیت راجه جای بالا است وزیر : نیت رانه زو دونه دورست و دیر

man's deepest essence becomes identical with the common source of all things, with God, so that he can say, 'I am God'; and since God is the sum total of all that lives, he is all too. There exists nothing except the Divine Unity. The soul is God and God is the soul. Ātman is Brahman and Brahman is Ātman, as Sankara puts it. As God becomes man in Christ, says Eckhart, justifying this contention, so in Him we may become God "If I am to know God directly I must become completely He and He, I, so that this He and this I become and are one."³¹ Thus absorbed in the Divine Essence, the soul may cry with Hallāj 'I am God' with Bayāzid 'Praise be to me' and with Rūmī too who says: "Some times I say to three, 'Tis thou' sometimes, 'Tis I': whatever I say I am the Sun illuminating all."³²

In this mystical deification the human nature becomes extinct and the soul merges in the Sea of Divine Unity as salt in water, so that when anything touches the Divine Spirit it touches the soul too. It is a communion in which there takes place the transformation of the

31. As quoted by Selbie (W.B.) in Psychology of Religion, p.262.

32. The Mathnawi. Vol. I; 1940.

کہ توی گویم ترا کامی منم :: سرچہ گویم : کتاب روشنم



lover's personality into that of the Beloved, whereby each says to the other 'yā enā' 'O thou who art I'. The lover has become what he loves : He has become the Beloved, and has won for himself and for all the pearl of 'I am the True'. As Eckhart observes, "God is a sole good in which all separate goods are contained". All things are to God as a drop to the ocean. The soul inhabiting God turns to God as the drop becomes the ocean.³³ One who has attained to oneness with God, says Grigori Sa' Witch Skoveroda', the Russian mystic feels that he is no longer an organism with bodily parts, but a being burning with the fire of God's love. Hence the words of Rūmī:

"Do not regard him as a seeker of
the treasure: he is the treasure
himself : how should the lover in
reality be other than the beloved?"³⁴

These words of Rūmī find their echo in the Gītā which tells us that "the sinless yogi thus, uniting his self constantly with God, easily enjoys the eternal bliss of oneness with Brahme".³⁵ This oneness with Brahme is the return of the soul which is a portion of the Lord, an

33. As quoted by Otto (Rudolph) in Mysticism, East and West, p.22.

34. The Mathnawi. Vol. VI; 2259.

طالب گنجش مبین نرد گنج است : درست کی باشد بمعنی نیر درست

35. The Bhagavadgītā; Ch. VI-v, 28.

uncreated spark of the divine, to its home in God. In this return the seeker is free from the thought of an "I", "thou becoming as in verity", as Lord Kṛiṣṇa says, "he speedily enters into me",³⁶ for as Rūmī asserts:

"Everything is perishing except His face:
unless thou art in His face (essence) do
not seek to exist."³⁷

The Upanisads give a similar conception when they speak in some passages of the complete identification of the soul and God. They present the ladder of spiritual experience with a series of five ascending steps.³⁸ The first stage of this experience, says the Bṛhadāraṇyakaopaniṣad, is mystically apprehending the glory of the Self within us as distinct from him. In the second stage there is the identity of the "I" with the Self, in the third the identity of the self with the Absolute, of the individual spirit and the Universal Spirit, of the Ātman and the Brahman, and in the fourth the identification of the 'I' with the Absolute and the 'Thou' with the Absolute.

36. Ibid. Ch. XVIII; v: 55.

37. The Mathnawī. Vol. I; 3052.

کل شیء مِلَّاکِ جَنُوبِهِ اَوْ : چون نہ درو بہ اوستی صبر

38. Ranade (R.D.): A Constructive Survey of Upanishadic Philosophy; pp. 276-78.

It is the Ātman that calls itself 'I' within us and this Ātman being identical with the Absolute, it follows that I am the Absolute. The fifth and the last stage of experience, is the experience of Brahman as the All. "That which is that subtle essence, in it all that exists", says Uddālak Arūni, "has its self. It is the True. It is the Self and thou, O Gvatsaketū, art it."³⁹

This is the union in identity with the all-pervading Infinite Consciousness, wherein one sees God in all beings and all beings in God. The Gītā describes it in the words : "He who, established in unity, worships Me as residing in all beings as their very self, that Yogi, though engaged in all forms of activities, dwells in Me,"⁴⁰ a description that finds expression in Kūma too.

"I am the theft of Yagves, I am the pain
of the sick, I am both cloud and rain,
I have reigned in the gardens."⁴¹

What lies at the root of this claim to Lordship, is man's desire for Lordship, for the Divine Omnipotence, and this desire is innate in him, as he is nothing but

39. Chāndogya Upaniṣad; VI.11.3.

40. The Bhagavadgītā; Ch. VI; v.31.

41. Nicholson (R.A.) : Selected Poems from the Divān-i-
Chāmeṣ-i-Fahriz; p.216.

God's own image. It is the natural expression of his divinity, says Ghazzālī, as he is of the substance of the angels, as he is one of the works of Divinity. The attainment of divinity, therefore, is his perfection, and from this perfection, perfect repose ensues.

This concept of deification goes against the spirit of Islam. Judaism, Christianity and Islam regard it as blasphemous for the creature to claim identity with the Creator because the gulf between the two can never be bridged. Union is, therefore, interpreted dualistically by them. There is union but not identity between God and the soul. For this reason many sufis who used such expressions as "I am God" were accused of heresy by the orthodox theologians. It was not till the time of Al-Ghazzālī that sufism gained recognition in Islam.

Stace holds that the Upanishadic conception of union, wherein the individual self realises its identity with the Universal Self, is nearer the truth, because the fully developed mystical consciousness involves the disappearance of all distinctions, even between subject and object, between individual self and the Universal Self. It is neither mere identity nor mere difference, but identity in difference.⁴² When the will of the individual is

42. Stace (W.T.): The Teachings of the Mystics; p.238.

surrendered to the Divine will, which culminates the partial self in the all-comprehending Universal Self, union is attained. In this all the contradictions and discords of life are resolved, and all illusions fade away, and all the barriers between the Absolute and the soul are removed.

The unitive state is an 'Eternal Now', comprehending within itself the past, the present and the future. In the experience of unity the relations of time and space vanish with all other relations, with the result that the mystic, who enjoys this experience, is raised above these relations. He has the view of things as they are and as they will be. Therefore, to look eagerly for what lies beyond the present, to think of the morrow and to hope for any object of anticipation, is quite unlike him. As rain drops become pearls in oyster-shells, so in him all evil is transformed into Universal Good and all contradictions belonging to the phenomenal world are moulded into the pure doctrine of Divine Unity and Love.

"To them the unseen things of the future become manifest; to them recollection of the past becomes naught. These persons have the nature of the muskdeer's gland : externally they are as blood while

within them is the fragrance of
musk."⁴³

Union is ineffable. No one has uttered it, neither the mystic nor God Himself. And yet, the mystic tries to express the inexpressible by all symbolical means, to the end that men may form some conception of the ineffable. The fact that he has reached his journey's end does not prevent him from interpreting the deepest mysteries of his experience for others.

Rūmī draws a distinction between union and infusion or incarnation. Incarnation, he says, involves homogeneity with God. But God is unique. And the mystic cannot become God absolutely, however much he may be invested with the Divine Attributes. He always remains a slave and creature of the Lord, even in his divine aspect without being absolutely identical with Him. He is real, haqq, but not the real, al-haqq.

But then when the soul becomes one with God, it does become homogeneous with God. And how does it become homogeneous with God? Like water, says Rūmī, that becomes

43. The Mathnavi, Vol. I : 1467, 1470.

عجب آئنده برایشان گشت ناش : ذکرهای پیش ایشان گشت ناش
طبع نافه آهوست آن قوم را : از بردن خون و درو نشان مشکها

homogeneous with earth in plant, or like air that becomes homogeneous with fire in consistency or like wine that becomes homogeneous with the body. The soul passes away in God; and when it passes away in God, it does not persist as an individual, but as God, bearing the stamp of God's fest, the eternal imprint of the Divine attributes. "Since my genus is not the genus of my king," he says, "my ego has passed away for the sake of His ego."⁴⁴ It was Hallāj, that applied the doctrine of incarnation to the mystical union. Hallāj was no doubt in the unitive state when he said, 'I am God.' But this 'I' was divine and was the result of God's own light.

"This 'I', O presumptuous meddler, was "He" (God) in the inmost consciousness, through oneness with the Light, not through belief in the doctrine of incarnation."⁴⁵

The consciousness of attainment of beatitude reaches a point where the soul becomes intoxicated with its delight and merges itself in an overwhelming ocean of bliss. This feeling of rapturous communion with the

44. Ibid. Vol. II; 1173.

جسے مابین نیست جسے نہا : ماے ما شد ہر ماے او فنا

45. Ibid. Vol. V; 2038.

این انا صوبد در سترای فضول : ز باہ دلورہ ارزائی ملول

Divine is called *Sāk* or intoxication and ecstasy. It involves intense emotional excitement, loss of self-control and insensibility to external impressions, accompanied by increased powers of vision and audition. However, it may also express itself in complete calm as it may express itself in a manifestation of emotion.

Now, the question arises : should the seeker ever remain submerged in the sea of intoxication or should he emerge to sobriety or sobriety? This question is answered in various ways. Some *sufis* like *Abū-Yazīd* believed that intoxication is superior to sobriety, for, they argued, there is no veil greater than sobriety between man and God. Sobriety involves the fixity and the equilibrium of human attributes whereas intoxication involves the destruction of human attributes, so that man loses himself in God and maintains within himself only those faculties that do not belong to the human genus but only to God. This is the ultimate aim of all search and all efforts, to be ever lost in God and to be eternally drunk by the wine of His Love.

On the other hand, *Rūmī*, *Jūnays* and others proclaimed the superiority of sobriety over intoxication. They maintained that what is essential to become a perfect *sufi* is sobriety, because one ought to be sober and stand-



fact, if one is to become a proper model for others a proper guide to the searching souls. His perfection does not consist in saving himself alone, but in saving all, and the true lover of God is he who sets out to save all. Hallāj, however, regarded both sobriety and intoxication as the human attributes which veil man from God. Man's aim, therefore, should be the annihilation of these attributes as well.

But Rūmī, for whom fanā is the moral transformation caused by the substitution of the lower self by the higher, approaches the problem from a different point of view. He believes that purity is the attribute of the true mystic, as purity is the attribute of the lover who is dead to his own attributes and is living in the attributes of the Beloved. He is free too, free from all bondage of change and decay, of space and time, so that his state is hidden from perception, thought and imagination. He has become annihilated in this world as well as the next, and is made divine in his very annihilation of humanity. His existence has no cause and his communion with the Divine Beloved has no end, so much so that whether he is physically present in this world or no, his perfection suffers no loss and no diminution.

In so far as this is so, there is no reason why the lover of God should not return to the world of matter from his rapturous communion with the Divine Beloved. And Rūmī maintains that he does return from the deep sea of intoxication and ecstasy to a sobriety of a normal or supra-normal state of consciousness and thereby rises from negation of the Many to affirmation of the One revealed in the Many. The naughted senses and faculties reappear even when under the sway of the Divine splendour, and he lands once again into the world of space and time in order to fulfil his mission of making God manifest by his own words and deeds. The healer of mankind as he is, he deems it necessary to throw off his intoxicating bliss and regain his lost senses, before he takes upon himself the hard task of healing the sick souls. Under his influence the contaminating influence of the phenomenal world fades away, and in the end all souls are saved.

"When night comes, 'tis again the time
of bearing the burden : the stars,
which had become hidden, go again to
work. God gives back to the sense-
less ones their lost senses : they
return to consciousness troop after
troop, with rings of mystic knowledge
in their ears."⁴⁶

46. Ibid. Vol. I: 3673-74.

چون شب آمد باز وقت بار شد : انجم پنجمان شده بر کار شد
سیدوشان را داد به حق صوفیا : حلقه حلقه خلقیاد را گواشیا

The ocean of bliss is different from the mystical union and is significant only as a prelude to the complete unitive experience. The mystic is destined to rise ultimately to sobriety whereby he is led to contemplate the one Reality in the multitude of phenomena. In so far as this is so, mystical intoxication is relatively inferior to the unitive state and is something to be passed beyond.

The journey of the spirit is unconditioned and endless in every respect. And so, whatever the degree of revelation to which the mystic may have attained, he must leave it behind and advance endlessly. "Pass beyond intoxication", says Rūmī "and be one who bestows intoxication : move away from this mutability into His permanence⁴⁷, for there is the journey in God after the journey to God.

Thus, the unitive state is the stage of inner unity, wherein the soul is simply one, with no resistance offered by the world of matter. It is the attainment of the higher consciousness, the regaining of one's own higher being. The dualistic character of ordinary existence is transcended in an extraordinary way and the soul comes into possession of itself as a whole. It is as if a larger

47. Ibid. Vol. VI; 630.

بگذر از مستی و منی بخشی باش : زین تلون تنل کن در استواش



life has overwhelmed the mystic working with him and through him, the vast spiritual environment acting with him too. In the deep reaches of this experience there is a complete assurance of the presence of God, and the soul is at peace with Him and with all that is. To it everything is real and everything is God.

III. The life of the soul consists in the particular spiritual result it produces and sacrifice, gnosis, is the result it produces, the fruit it bears. The *fanā* is complete; the sacrifice of the existing self is complete; and the pain and agitation of love is complete. Death has destroyed the spirit's earthly shade and the struggle of the mystic is complete. The issue of it all is the mystic's acquisition of the hidden treasure, the treasure of gnosis.

The purified heart of the seeker is the spiritual organ and the seat of mystic revelation and Divine Knowledge. It beholds the Unseen by the light of certainty, which is nothing but a beam of God's own light. He who knows the light knows the truth, and he who knows the light knows eternity.

Gnosis is the direct knowledge of God and the mystical realization of oneness with God. It is the

mystic knowledge gained through revelation. Revelation is a flash of lightening, wherein the Divine Light itself flashes into the heart, overwhelming each and every human faculty in its own eternal light. The curtain is drawn aside and there is a momentary sight of the Divine mystery. It is the Beatific Vision that is enjoyed and it is the idea of a "bliss that is realised. Nicholson maintains that this *Marifat* is equivalent to the gnosis of Hellenistic theosophy which means the direct knowledge of God based on revelation or apocalyptic vision. *Marifat* depends entirely on the will of God, who bestows it upon those who are created with the capacity for receiving it. It flashes upon the heart and overwhelms every human faculty. The individual is completely under the control of a rapture, that deprives him of the consciousness of his own existence.⁴⁸ Rumi would say it is the ray of light that has returned to its own source crying:

"When the King bids me fly in His
Way I fly up to the heart's zenith,
Like His beaus."⁴⁹

48. Nicholson (R.A.) : The Mystics of Islam; p.71.

49. The Mathnawi. Vol. II; 1158.

چون پیرایه مرا نشد در روشی : ی پریم رابع دل چوں پرتوشی

Illumination is a condition in which consciousness is so sharpened and so intensified that direct contemplation of the Unseen becomes possible. The perceptions are so cleansed and the senses so quickened that the seeker is endowed with a super-natural power of discernment and a deeper insight into the things of this world as well as of the world beyond. Flooded by the Divine Light he is transformed into it and his infinite spirit dwells in a state of perfection. "Such a surface that resembles the morning sun", says Būai, " 'tis sinful to rend a countenance like that."⁵⁰

God is Truth. God is knowledge. And all Knowledge is the knowledge of God. In the knowledge of Him lies the eternal bliss. Sat, Cit, Ānand and He is called by the Indian thinkers, He that combines in Himself Truth, knowledge and Bliss. But He is not the Deity that sits in serene abstraction far away from the human soul. He lives in each and every soul, and is never foreign to the individual consciousness, although, in virtue of His ignorance and universality, He is hidden to man's perception, so near and so manifest and yet lost to the view, as Būai puts it.

50. Ibid. Vol. V; 554.

This one and the same being manifests itself everywhere, absolutely in God and relatively in creation. The universe is a unity, although not a unity absolutely above multiplicity and diversity. It is a unity divided into many members. But each member is infinite in its own way, in so far as it holds in itself all that is, in so far as it is the mirror of the whole world, a compressed representation of it. Everything is connected with everything else, and is in harmony with it although different from it. Everything contains everything else, and is contained by everything else. In one word, all is in all, as all is in the universe and in God.

Here is the poetic genius in Kūni describing God and the fate of man. God is the Ground of man's consciousness. His Essence is hidden; only His gifts are sensible. The wine is hidden; the pot is manifest. He is the water and we are the mill-stone; He is the wind and we are the dust blown by it; He is the spirit and we are the hand and foot; He is the reason, we are too torqued; He is the joy and we the laughter, so much so that every movement of ours is a continual profession of faith and a witness to Eternal One.⁵¹ And yet, how is it that we are uncon-

51. Ibid. Vol. V; 3305-16.

cious of the spiritual treasure contained in our own souls? The gates of spirit are ever open to us, and how is it that we are unconscious of the jewel in hand, and ignorant of what constitutes the very source of our life, of the One Life in which we live, move and have our being?

Man is a microcosm concentrating within himself the whole content of the macrocosm. An eternal element as he is in himself, he not only bears in himself all that exists, but also has a knowledge of it, and is capable of developing it to perfection. And this he achieves through a knowledge of his own self, for perfection consists in making active his own potential possession. It is an unfolding of his own capacities, an elevation of the unconscious into consciousness. In other words, his perfection consists in his self-knowledge. But his self-knowledge is nothing but his knowledge of God, for God is knowledge, and all knowledge is knowledge of God. "No one can understand a king but a king", says Ghazālī, "therefore God has made each of us a king in miniature, so to speak over a kingdom which is an infinitely reduced copy of his own."⁵²

52. Al Ghazālī : *The Alchemy of Happiness*, tr. by Glad Field, p.35.

Consequently, the soul of man is the source from which knowledge of God springs. But the source is contaminated, the eye of heart blinded, and he cannot see the Truth in himself. The power of discrimination is his subtle essence, and yet he cannot perceive the pure spirit of Divine origin, his own pure self - This is the spiritual blindness, the melody of the soul, as Rūmī calls it, that is the defilement of the senses, caused by the obstruction of the phenomenal self. And this is the source of all disbelief, disbelief that seeks evidence of the rising sun, and that reduces man to nothingness, a dry-lipped jar which is full of water, to use Rūmī's words.

The spirit of divine revelation is the Universal Reason, the Logos, and it is immanent in prophets and saints. It is the spiritual faculty in man, conveying the message of God to the soul, the knowledge or communication received by the soul directly from God, through a voice inaudible to sense-perception and in-comprehensible to the intellect.

There is an ascending grade of knowledge in man. The life of senses is succeeded by the life of reason, which transcends the data of the senses. And the life of reason is succeeded by the life of the prophetic self, which is capable of comprehending realities that the

categorion of the intellect cannot comprehend. So, the prophetic self is higher than the rational self and has nothing in common with it. All arts and all sciences in the world have their source in the prophetic consciousness, experience and reason having no other function than of merely further adding to it. This flash of inspiration defies description and is immune from error. Prophethood is a stage above Reason with an eye of perception of its own which reason cannot comprehend.

"The intellect of Ahmad (Mohammed) was not hidden from any one; but his spirit of prophetic inspiration was not apprehended by every soul. This astronomy and medicine is knowledge given by Divine inspiration to the prophets: where is the way for intellect and senses to advance towards that which is without spatial direction?"⁵³

Chamāzā refers to this Divine Prophetic spirit which belongs to the prophets and saints. According to him the human soul has five faculties -- the sensory

53. The Majma'at, Vol. II, 3259; Vol. IV, 1294.

عقل احمد ار کسی پنهان نشد :: روح وحی درک برهان نشد
 این مجمل و قلب وحی انبیاست :: عقل وحی را سوی بی شوره کجاست

faculty which receives messages conveyed by the senses, Imagination, which records these messages, Intelligence, which apprehends all that is beyond the capacity of the senses and the imagination, the reasoning power which deduces fresh knowledge from the data of pure reason and lastly the prophetic spirit. This prophetic spirit is the source of all revelation of the Unseen and attains to the Knowledge of God.⁵⁴

Rūmī proves the existence of wahy in his own way. He says, all sciences and arts that exist in the world are taught by teachers. Now, either this process of teaching has no beginning or it begins in one who has received the knowledge through intuition, untaught and uninstructed. The first case is unacceptable as it leads to infinite regress, and the second proves the existence of wahy.

Again, wahy is one and the only source of revelation. Rūmī here abolishes the orthodox distinction between the superior inspiration of prophets, wahy and the inferior one of saints ilhām and says that the sufis observe this distinction only to disguise its real nature from the vulgar. Since sainthood is the mystical relation of one-man with God, it is the inward aspect of prophecy

54. Smith (Margaret) : Al-Ghazālī, the Mystic; p.142.

too and since it is derived immediately from God, it is the very basis of prophecy. In other words, prophecy is infinite because saintship is infinite, and every prophet is a saint. God whispers His secrets on all perplexed and troubled souls and wahy descends on all these souls. Speaking of this inspiration from within immanent in all, Gandhi says in tone of Rumi that God reveals Himself to everyone, but man is deaf to the 'still small voice'. Obedience to this voice, he says, is the 'Law of our Being'.⁵⁵

"The inspiration of God is not like astrology or geomancy or dreams — and God best knoweth what is right. The sufi in explaining their doctrine call it the Divine inspiration, the inspiration of the heart, in order to disguise its real nature from the vulgar."⁵⁶

This conception of prophethood and its medium of knowledge wahy, revelation is opposed to the spirit of Islam. According to Islam prophethood was the highest dignity of man and came to an end with Mohammed, who was

55. Gandhi (M.K.) : The Supreme Power; pp. 68-70.

56. The Khatirani, Vol. IV; 1352-53.

نه نجوم است و نه رمل است و نه قران : و حق و الله اعلم بالصواب
اربي ردبولي عامه در بيان : و حق دل گويد من راسو ميان

its perfect embodiment. After him man could only aspire to become guides of the people.

For Hūmā the source of revelation is the eternal soul of man and nothing beyond it. Man cannot be inferior to the bee, which receives revelation from God as to how it should build its honey-comb; nor is he less than a crow to whom God revealed how to dig the earth. Man is given to revelation too, even more than any other of God's creation.

This is what he means when he says that the spiritually minded see with the inner eye. This inward eye is the highest spiritual faculty in man, his inner light that is its own evidence. It is the eye of the soul, the light of divine inspiration that beholds at once the past, the present and the future, diffusing through all things the keen brightness of its own vision. It is the spiritual sense, par excellence that transcends every other sense and faculty; it is the recognition of the Divine and the immediate vision of the Divine, the vision that penetrates the hidden, that investigates the impalpable by the light of its own.

"The parrot whose voice comes from
Divine inspiration and whose begin-
ning was before the beginning of
existence is hidden within time :

thou hast seen the reflection of
her upon the things of the pheno-
menal world."⁵⁷

This is the mystic's illumination by the inner
light, light that makes the imperceptible perceptible
and the invisible visible. This mystical perception
is one wherein all the senses unite into one sense, for
as soon as one sense loosens its bonds, all the rest
become free too, as soon as one sense perceives the
spiritual world, all the rest perceive it too. No sense
is independent of the rest, as no sense perceives its
own particular object of perception, so that the eye
may converse and the tongue may gaze, the ear may speak
and the hand may listen, all mingled into one and all
turned into one eye. Says Rūmī:

"Then, when thou hast been delivered
from the body, thou wilt know that
ear and nose can become eye."⁵⁸

Ghazzālī admits that the inward eye cannot be at
fault. It is the spiritual insight which sees through
the visible and temporal in clairvoyant fashion and dis-
covers the eternal. In this respect it is set against
the outward eye which sees what is far off as near and

57. Ibid. Vol. I; 1717-18.

طولی کایه زونی آواراد: دیشی اره عارودود آغازو
اسره تست آن طری یان: نکس اورا دیده تو بران و آن

58. Ibid. Vol. IV; 2400.

بیس دای چون که رستی از بران: گوئی وین چشمتی دانه شد

what is large as small.⁵⁹ God says in the Gītā:

"But surely you cannot see Me
with these gross eyes of yours.
Therefore, I couchsafe to you
the divine eye. With this you⁶⁰
behold My divine power of Yoga.

Rūmī repeats these words when he says:

"From Thy infinite bounty there
came an inward eye to the falcon
soul that was flying for Thy sake."⁶¹

For this reason gnosis is incommunicable. It cannot be taught as it comes in the form of Divine revelation and inspiration, wherein each soul receives it through its own personal communication with the Divine. "The Holy Spirit will tell thee the tale of it without me", says Rūmī, "Nay, thou wilt tell it even to thine own ear — neither I nor another than I will tell it to thee."⁶² Likewise, abū Yazīd observes: "You have taken your knowledge from those learned in outward ceremonial, a dead

59. Smith (Margaret): Al-Ghazālī, the Mystic; p.144.

60. The Bhagavadgītā. Ch. XI; v.8.

61. The Mathnawī. Vol. VI; 2812.

باردله دکه بی ندی برسد : از طایب دست جانی رسد

62. Ibid. Vol. III; 1298-99.

thing from the dead, but we have taken our knowledge from the Living One who does not die."⁶³ It is experience alone that is important, writes Renade, because it is experience alone that makes Reality real. Reality cannot be attained either through words or through thought and imagination because it is infinite as well as unique, quite different from what can be seen, heard or sensed.⁶⁴

Now that the mystical perception is of this nature, the senses of necessity form a hindrance to this perception. All the faculties and affections of the lower self form a distorting medium through which everything is seen double. If these are active the soul loses its power to contemplate reality, and thereby becomes veiled from his vision of reality.

Every object of sensible or intellectual perception is nothing but an idol. The ordinary man's measure of vision is limited by limited capacity of the senses. The jar has five spouts, says Rūai, and water cannot stay in it, meaning thereby that the bodily experience with its five senses dissipates all the spiritual energy instead of

63. Smith (Margaret) : Al-Ghazālī, the Mystic; p. 126.

64. Renade (R.D.) : Pathway to God in Kannada Literature; pp. 213-4.

increasing it. Therefore these spouts must be closed if the water of faith is to remain unspilled, if the water of divine knowledge arising from the inward spring is to remain unspoiled. "Stop up its spouts", he says "and keep it filled with water from the jar of reality, for God said, "Close your eyes to vain desire."⁶⁵ Man gives up speaking like a child and thinking like a child as soon as he grows up. In the same manner he has to give up objects of sense and the knowledge derived therefrom, because, by engaging himself with these, he will ever be deprived of the spiritual essence and will never cease to think of God as a child does.

Knowledge acquired by hearing is inferior to knowledge gained by actually seeing. The ear is a go-between between you and Reality, while the eye is the immediate vision of Reality. The ear gives only words while the eye gives the direct experience. In the words of Rūmī, the knowledge of fire by words is different from and inferior to the knowledge of fire from fire itself. It is an error, therefore, to be satisfied with the certainty of knowledge derived from others. Seek to be cooked by fire itself, he says, and you have the true

⁶⁵ The Mathnawi. Vol. I: 2714.

لولا برهه وبرداری ز من .. گشت مخصوص من صودا البصائر

Knowledge of fire; burn yourself and you have the intuitional certainty.

The description given by Rūmī would involve a distinction between direct and perceptual knowledge and indirect and non-perceptual knowledge on the one hand, and all the empirical sources of knowledge and direct experience of intuition on the other. As on the empirical level perceptual knowledge is direct and more reliable than the inferential and other sources of nonperceptual knowledge, so also we can make a distinction between direct experience and the knowledge gained through books and other sources. This direct experience is intuitive. It is 'anūbhava' as the Indian Philosophers called it, and it is through Love.

Furthermore, knowledge acquired from book and teacher, from concepts and reflection is a heavy burden on the mind when retained in the mind although it makes one superior to others in intelligence. Such a mind is the Preserving tablet that goes about in search of knowledge. Then there is the mind that has passed beyond this stage, the Preserved Tablet, as Rūmī calls it, that is endowed with the other intelligence which is the gift of God. The fountain of this knowledge is in the midst of the soul, whence it gushes forth continually. This God-

given knowledge never becomes impure, nor does it become a burden when not poured out. Sense perception is possessed by all, but what is needed is the clear eye, which belongs to the ocular sense alone, for the fountain of true knowledge lies within oneself.

Ghazālī gives a similar conception. The study of human knowledge does not lead any one to God, instead what is necessary is the choice of effort, the elimination of vices, the cutting off of all ties and the setting of the concern entirely upon God. Then and then only enlightenment dawns upon him. The true sufi has his knowledge bestowed on him by God, *al-alum al-illāhiyya*.⁶⁶ "But what if man had eyes to see the true beauty-," said Ecceatus, "— the divine beauty, I mean, pure and clear and unalloyed, not clogged with the pollutions of morality and all the colours and vanities of human life — thither looking and holding converse with the true beauty, divine and simple."⁶⁷

"Endeavour that it (the fancy) may
pass from thine ear into thine eye,
and that what has hitherto been

66. Smith (Margaret) : Al-Ghazālī, the Mystic; pp. 125-26.

67. Plato: The Symposium; 211-12, tr. by Jowett.

Unreal may become real. There is no intuitive (actual) certainty until you burn; if you desire this certainty, sit down in the fire."⁶⁸

Therefore, one who seeks the Highest is not satisfied with the proofs of intellect. Its only use is that it serves as a prelude to the spiritual quest. The spiritual quest is beyond the secondary causes. It is all wonder, all bewilderment. The illumined spirit is quite independent of all premise and all conclusion and all that contradicts, as God's Light is independent of all logical proofs. As Bertrand Russell puts it, "Reason is a harmonizing, controlling force rather than a creative one. Even in the most purely logical realm, it is insight that first arrives at what is new."⁶⁹

"Know that true knowledge consists in seeing fire plainly; not in pretending that smoke is evidence of fire."⁷⁰

Nevertheless, the rudiments of spiritual knowledge are received in the beginning through the senses and the intellect. The Light of wisdom enters through these avenues, penetrates the heart, ascends from the heart to

68. The Mathnavi. Vol. V; 3920; Vol. II; 861.

همه‌ی کبرگوش در شمع رود. : آغ‌شان باطل نیست آن حق شود
ناشوری نیست آن بین. : بین یقین خواص در شمع در شین

69. Russell (B.): Mysticism and Logic; p.19.

70. The Mathnavi. Vol. VI; 2505.

خود صبر آن دان که دیده‌اش عیان. : نه کپ‌دل علی‌لنار آن



the eye, thereby changing it into oculus cordis, and hearing becomes vision.

Human mind can form an idea only through the medium of symbols, images and impressions, which veil it from the Truth. But these forms are not without educative values, because they bear the traits of the Divine Beauty in themselves. The external senses are the manifestations of the internal senses, just as the body is the manifestation of the soul, and so each is potentially capable of imparting knowledge of Truth. Human intellect is the shadow of God, who has endowed it with apprehension and enlightenment. The forms of thought that rise to the surface of consciousness in varied succession, the passing states of mind and feeling are nothing but the impressions made by the Divine Spirit. They are the husks of the Divine Essence and Attributes which ultimately determine every phase of the conscious life.

Speech is the outward form of these thoughts and mental states. For Rūmi speech, signifies the rational and spiritual element in man, the speaking animal as he calls him, speaking outwardly and incessantly within.

Comparing him to a muddy torrent and his speech to the pure water, he says that man's animality is the mud that is accidental and being of earth, passes away. It is speech and knowledge that remain hereafter, even after the body perishes. "O brother", he says, "you are that same thought of yours; as for rest of you, you are only bone and fibre".⁷¹

Words, therefore, are not mere assertions for those who can grasp their inmost meanings. Are not the words of a friend reality to a friend? They are mere assertions only to a stranger, whose ignorance is the cause of his disbelief. Rūmī argues that when one who knows Arabic says in Arabic, 'I know Arabic', his words are not mere assertions but reality, although his saying that he knows Arabic is nothing but an assertion. They are the evidence of reality to one who knows the speaker. It is only to a stranger that they are an assertion, and he may disbelieve this assertion of his. It is the ignorant that stick to words as mere assertions and disagree about them. To the illumined heart of the mystic, however, who apprehends the reality denoted by them, they are realities.

71. Ibid. Vol. II; 277.

ای برادر تو ممان از پیشه : ما بقی تو استخوان و ریشہ⁵

In short, all the physical and mental faculties of man are neither good nor bad in themselves. They are instruments that can be used either to promote good life or to destroy it. And, in so far as they are derived from one origin, the Universal Spirit, they are the means whereby man is enabled to fulfil the purposes for which he was created. Their light is essential however much they may be polluted by the world of matter, and however much they may be incapable of accompanying the cyclic to his goal, because the phenomenal is the bridge to the noumenal and because these phenomenal ways and means are ruled by the human spirit. And what is human spirit? A reservoir that is filled with the water of Divine Knowledge, which purifies each and every bodily and mental faculty, thereby pouring wisdom and love through them:

"Since, you have perceived the dust,
namely, the form, perceive the wind;
since you have perceived the foam,
perceive the ocean of Creative Energy."⁷²

Gnosis is the basis of all knowledge in the world, the various kinds of knowledge in the world being the various aspects of one and the same pursuit. That over the

72. Ibid. Vol. VI; 1460.

چون عبادت نفس دیدی با دین: کف چو دیدی قلزم، بباد دین

road one follows, whether it is the poet's love of beauty or the scientist's devotion to science or the philosopher's speculation of the One, the end reached is the same. It is the spiritual apprehension of God and the true knowledge of God, that leads the ardent souls towards purity and perfection. Consequently, this knowledge is the basis of all good and evil in the world, of all quarrels and disagreements and of all questions and answers, as Rūmī puts it. Questioning is half the knowledge, for the ignorant has no skill to ask questions. Moses questioned God not because he was ignorant of God's purposes, but because he intended to disclose the mystery of Divine wisdom and Divine action to the vulgar. Man questions because he was originally endowed with knowledge. His quarrels and disagreements are due to the diversity of human nature and due to the fact that truth can be brought about by the appearance of conflict and opposition.

"Both question and answer arise from knowledge, just as the thorn and the rose from earth and water. Both perdition and salvation arise from knowledge, just as bitter and sweet (fruit) from moisture."⁷⁵

75. Ibid. Vol. IV: 5009-10.

هم سوال از علم خیرد هم جواب : همچنانک خار و گل از خاک و آب
هم ضلال از علم خیرد هم هدی : همچنانک تلخ و شیرین از سبزه

All seek this Divine Knowledge once possessed by them in past eternity and recognise it as soon as they find it. The cry of the prophets and saints is the call of God Himself to the soul in exile, their voice itself being an evidence of Truth. The soul has never heard a similar cry before; and yet, it recognises the strange voice by immediate perception. It remembers and it responds.

This doctrine of Rūmī is similar to the Platonist doctrine of Anamnesis and the self-evidence of Truth revealed in mystical experience. It is true that one who does not experience reality immediately and intuitively does not know reality. But how can one doubt reality when one finds it face to face with oneself? Tell the thirsty man, "here is a cup of water for you". Does he say: "This is mere assertion, go away?". The soul, likewise, does not seek testimony and proof of God even after finding Him. It intuitively recollects its close affinity with the Divine Beloved in pre-existence instead, and is overjoyed. In Rūmī's own words:

"That stranger (the soul) by immediate perception of the strange (wondrous) voice, has heard from God's tongue (the words) "Verily, I am near".⁷⁴

74. Ibid. Vol. II; 3601.

آن غریب از دوق آوار غریب.. از بان حق شنودانی قریب

In other words, the secret of the Divine mystery revealed to the gnostic makes no claim to be novel. As W. James points out, there is a resemblance between a mystical insight and the experiences of an individual, wherein he realises afresh or for the first time, some ancient truth. It dawns upon him, for it was there just near him like Justice in Plato's Republic, and he never saw it until now. There is nothing original in the mystic knowledge, in so far as what the gnostic has made is the rediscovery of the old rather than the discovery of the new, in so far as what he has achieved is a recollection of the past rather than a foresight of the future.

These are three stages on the way to immediate and intuitive apprehension of Truth. Opinion or belief that is based on probability, Religious knowledge, Ilm-i-imānī, that is based on faith and Mystic knowledge of certainty, Ilm-i-yaqīn, that is based on direct experience.

All knowledge begins with opinion and ends in certainty. Opinion leads to knowledge and knowledge leads to certainty. Certainty is simply yaqīn, the certainty gained by knowledge of an object through hearing. It leads to ainu'l-yaqīn, the certainty gained by seeing and is inferior to it. Transcending ainu'l-yaqīn is the stage of Haggu'l-yaqīn, the certainty gained by feeling and by

being one with the object. Thus man knows God, first by hearing about Him, then by seeing men of God in love with Him and finally by being himself in love with Him.

This is the highest kind of knowledge in which everything is contained as one. This is the perfect indubitable knowledge, that beholds the unity of all things, all essences and all truths, without any need of the detailed processes of the reasoning faculty. Questioning is seeing God and the universe as two distinct essences. But when the unity becomes manifest, the answer is found in the question and the effect in the cause. The knowledge of certainty becomes the intuition of certainty and the ardent soul stands in the immediate presence of the Infinite.

The Gita gives a similar conception when it says that jñāna is the highest form of religion and life of the spirit, wherein the individual becomes one with the Supreme Self, experiences the divine life and lives the divine life. The Yoga sutra talks of viveka-jñāna, knowledge of difference between eternal being and being conditioned by time, space and matter, between the eternal being, Brahman and illusory being, māya, as Sankara puts it, Jñāsyd, likewise, defines tawhīd, the affirmation of God's unity as the isolation of eternity from origination.



This knowledge is the integral knowledge of the underlying foundation of all existence. It is the knowledge of God. Blessedness consists in love towards God, says Spinoza, and this love towards God comes from knowledge. It is the intellectual love of God, for as Bradley points out, the intellectual effort to understand the universe is nothing but a way of experiencing the Deity.

Consequently, this is the knowledge that liberates one from rebirth. It is wisdom, as the Buddha calls it, that is, deliberate and true appreciation of the impermanence of things and of the painfulness of this life. It is to know the truth concerning misery, to know the truth concerning its origin, concerning the cessation of misery and the path leading to it. And the saint is he who is perfect in wisdom, wisdom that consists in insight and that is conjoined with meritorious thoughts.

Thus, knowledge is nothing but the perception of the Supreme. It is a perception that carries man beyond his narrow standpoint, thereby revealing the fact that all men have a common basis of life and that one Eternal Spirit lives and operates in all individual souls. This is the spiritual apprehension of reality, and this is the true knowledge of God, the state of pure and infinite knowledge wherein everything is known as it is.

Ghazzālī divides spiritual knowledge into practical knowledge, *Ilm-al-amāl*, which has to do with action and the contemplative, *Ilm-al-zuhāfā*. The former has for its purpose action in accordance with what is known, while the latter has only revelation. But then, the practical knowledge leads on to the contemplative, which in turn leads on to the direct intuition of God, which is the certainty derived from the Light Divine cast into the heart. The joy of vision, however, lies beyond contemplative knowledge.⁷⁵

Hujwiri talks of knowing God by means of His attributes. One who knows Him through His Beauty always longs for vision, and this longing is the result of love. One who knows Him through His Majesty is filled with awe. Ghazzālī here agrees with Hujwiri and says that the realization of God's Majesty causes awe while the contemplation of His Beauty produces love and longing.⁷⁶

Nicholas of Cusa likewise distinguishes four stages of knowledge : sense with imagination, which only gives confused images, the understanding which analyses and keeps the opposites distinct under the law of contradiction, the speculative reason which reconciles the opposites and the

75. Smith (Margaret) : Al Ghazzālī, the Mystic; pp.120-21.

76. *Ibid.* p. 131.

mystical supra-rational intuition which coincides the opposites in the infinite unity.⁷⁷ It is in this intuitive culmination of knowledge that the soul is united with God, and the antithesis of subject and object disappears. But then, he says, the distinction between these stages of cognition is not a rigid distinction as each comprehends the lower.

St. Thomas Aquinas mentions three stages in the vision of Truth. According to him God communicates truth to man by corporeal vision, by imaginary vision and by intellectual vision. But it is necessary that one distinguishes between false visions, which are man's own activity and those that are real. It is the intellectual vision that is completely free from fantasies, the angelic kind of knowledge, as St. Thomas calls it, that is not liable to any error. Adam saw God after this angelic fashion before his fall. And his knowledge of God was nothing but the irradiation of the Divine Wisdom itself.

The soul at first is unable to bear the light of Divine Wisdom. The grandeur of Divine Wisdom transcends the capacity of the soul, and when it invades the soul which is not yet illumined, it produces dazzlement, for,

77. Florenberg; History of Philosophy; pp. 20-21.

as it is said, the clearer and more manifest the divine things are the darker and more hidden they are to the soul, just as the brighter the light is the more it darkens the eye of the owl. In the words of Rūmī, "If the Intelligence displays its face in visible form, day will be dark beside its light."⁷⁸ And did not Plato say that had there been a visible image of Wisdom's loveliness, it would have been transporting?

Again, the contemplation of the Divine is painful and dark to the soul owing to its own lowliness and impurity. The Divine contemplation comprises in itself the highest perfections, and the soul which receives it is not yet wholly purified. And when the Divine Light invades the soul in order to expel its impurity, the soul of necessity endures much pain and suffering. It feels its own impurity so intensely that it regards even God to be its enemy and plunges into spiritual darkness, the dark night of the soul as it is called, wherein the soul feels rejected and forsaken by God. "And now look again," said Socrates, "and see what will naturally follow if the prisoners are released and disabused of their error. At first when any

78. The Mathnawi. Vol. IV; 2181.

گر بیدار و انما به عقل او : تیره باشد روز پیش نور او

of them is liberated and compelled suddenly to stand up and turn his neck round and walk and look towards the light he will suffer sharp pains; the glare will distress him, and he will be unable to see the realities of which in his former state he had seen the shadows."⁷⁹

God's knowledge is infinite, and men do not possess the capacity for receiving it in full measure. This infinite wisdom destroys their understanding, if poured without calculation and balance. It would have been advisable to explain the Divine mystery to all, says Rūmī, if all persons were fit to receive the mystery.⁸⁰ But, men are unfit to receive it due to their weak capacity to understand the things of the Unseen. The infinite wisdom of God is destructive to their frail minds, and one is afraid that they may be led into heresy in so far as they are not shielded by Divine Grace and guidance of the Perfect Man who alone can enjoy such a vision. The veils are for God's good purposes, he says again, for if God were to

79. Plato : The Republic; Book VII; 515, tr. by Jowett (H.).

80. The Mathnawi, Vol. I; 690-92.

شیخ ابن رافعتی سے از مرے :۔ یک ترسم تا نلفرد خالری
نکھتا دین تیغ بولادست تیز :۔ گردن داری تو سپردا پس گریز
بیٹی سے الماس بی امیر میا :۔ کریریدن تیغ را نبود حیا

display His Beauty without veil, men would have no power to endure it nor to enjoy it. Hence, for him the dark night of the soul is nothing but a manifestation of Divine Grace under the mask of wrath.

This dark night of the soul is more prolonged in some cases than in others and every seeker is partly subject to it. In scientific terminology it is the result of the disharmony between the physical and psychic sides of one's own nature with the result that progress in the spiritual life is not uniform. It is subject to constant set-backs, wherein the soul is plunged into despair. Doubts, fears and temptations hound it and the subject once again returns to the flesh. But then the struggle persists because the soul still aims at emancipation, at freedom from the bonds of the flesh, and there is bound to be pain and suffering till the process is complete. "But what the narrowing soul feels most painfully in this condition", says St. John of the Cross, "is the dreadful thought that God has abandoned it and has flung it into utter darkness ... it feels most vividly the shadows and laments of death and the torments of hell which consist, in the conviction that God in His anger has chastized and forsaken it for ever."⁸¹ But the self passes through it only to emerge from it into

81. Steco (V.T.) : The Teachings of the mystics; p.157.

the bliss of union. The dark night of the soul is a necessary part of the mystic's spiritual education.

And how does the soul learn to look at Reality, to look at God? Only by degrees, says Rūmī, for as Socrates points out, it will require to grow accustomed to the sight of the supper world. "The eye is slowly turned towards more and more real existence gaining a clearer vision every time, the soul gradually approaches nearer and nearer to the Divine Being, before full illumination is received. "And first he will see the shadows best," said Socrates, "next the reflections of men and other objects in the water, and then the objects themselves; then he will gaze upon the light of the moon and the stars and the spangled heaven; and he will see the sky and the stars by night better than the sun or the light of the Sun by day. Last of all he will be able to see the Sun and not mere reflections of him in the water."⁸²

Rūmī therefore says it is not without purpose that God gives everything by scale. He has the storehouses, but he bestows on man only a small portion of the infinite treasure to be a toggle in his nose, leading him towards the path of Divinity, to use his own words. And

82. Plato : The Republic: Book VII; 516, tr. by Jowett (3.).

that much of wisdom is given to him of necessity, for without it he will just not be able to move or act at all and will be ever merged in the darkness of illusion. On the contrary, if the whole of the Divine Wisdom is poured down upon him, then also he will be immovable, as the Divine Light will destroy all his power and understanding. The earth does not become a brick without water, nor does it become a brick when there is too much of water. And God bestows His Wisdom in such fashion as to promote real urge in man to grasp the Ultimate Reality and to comprehend the Divine Wisdom.

No man except the Perfect Man can have absolute Truth for himself, because the Divine Essence is inaccessible to finite minds. As such, all Truth represented by him is relative, the partial expression of it. Nevertheless, it is the duty of man to pursue the Truth as he sees it, to grasp the Ultimate Reality according to the measure of his own intelligence and to comprehend the Divine knowledge in proportion to his own power. The Light of God is in the soul of every man. And by being obedient to the Divine endowment the soul increases its measure of light, overcomes its innate tendencies to sin, and thereby becomes a spiritual instrument, an organ of the living God. This is the state of Perfect Man, on whom God bestows without measure and without calculation.

Gnosis is independent of positive religion and the gnostic performs only such acts of worship as are in accordance with his own vision of God, although in doing so he necessarily disobeys the religious law. The religious law, which sees things from the aspect of plurality, is for the vulgar, and the gnostic, who sees only the all-embracing Unity, decides by his own inward feeling how far the external forms of religion are good for him.

Gnosis is not derived from religion nor from any sort of human knowledge. It springs from the eternal source of all being, God and is revealed by God Himself to those who truly contemplate Him. Hence, gnosis is the realization of the fact that all appearance of 'otherness' besides 'One-ness' is deception. The gnostic cannot truly refer to himself any will, feeling, thought or action. And so, there are no divine rewards and punishments and no human standards of right and wrong. The word of God is given to him by a direct and intimate revelation and he subsists through God, so much so that he does not contemplate the Divine Essence, in so far as even a small trace of duality remains. This duality disappears only in *fana'-al-fana'*, the total passing away in the Undifferentiated Unity.

God is independent of all outward forms of worship. He is the primal Unity over and above all antithesis from which all created beings are unfolded. Yet he pervades the multitude of created beings, weaving all into one system, so that all contradictions which exist in the particulars, are resolved into perfect harmony. All is out of God, all is in God and all is one.

In this living unity of the universe all forms of worship are essentially one, because God reveals Himself in all these forms of worship. The ways to God are innumerable, each one leading to an ultimate spiritual experience peculiar to itself. In the words of Rumi, "In the world there are invisible ladders leading step by step up to the summit of heaven"⁸³ Furthermore, although God created the creatures in order that they might worship Him, He Himself is both the worshipper and the object of worship. What is called 'otherness' or 'individuality' is nothing but an illusion arising from the interplay of two aspects under which Reality is viewed. When stripped of their individualisation all phenomena become ultimately one with each other and with God.

83. The Mathnawi. Vol. V 2556.

فرد نهایت نیست بنیاد در جهان. : پایه پایه تا منان، سمات



Rūmī, therefore, concludes that there is no disbelief in the world and there is no disbeliever. Every infidel is potentially a true believer in so far as even the sceptic's disbelief has its source in God Himself. In other words, both the faithful and the infidels bear witness to God because both serve to manifest His omnipotence and both fulfil the purposes of Divine Providence. All, whether in the heavens or on earth, submit unto Him, and unto Him they return. The Divine Beauty reflected in the true believers causes them to worship God for love's sake, while the infidels acknowledge His Omnipotence dominated by His Majesty and Wrath. As Rūmī observes, the Divine Command is 'come willingly' to the true lovers and 'come unwillingly' to the blind travellers who, like the infant, love the nurse for the sake of milk.⁸⁴ The former love God for God Himself while the latter love Him for some secondary cause. But in either case the quest starts from God Himself. He draws every being into His Presence and whether they love something other than God Himself or whether they love Him alone, they are ultimately led to Him.

The sole cause of all difference in religion is the failure to realize this unity. " 'Tis a hundred pities

84. Ibid. Vol. III; 4590-4600.

and griefs," "says Rūmī", "that this borrowed unreal state of self-assertion has put the religious communities far from religious communion."⁸⁵ And yet the Divine Reason inspires men to triumph over illusion and to realize that essentially they are one with the Logos, and that all things are forms of the Logos which is the hidden ground of all.

To the gnostic, therefore, the external forms of religion are useless, as useless as snowshoes are to the diver. To him all religions are equal, there being only one real object of worship in all the variety of creeds, for "whichever ye turn there is the face of Allāh."⁸⁶ "Those who adore God in the Sun behold the Sun, and those who adore Him in living things see a living thing," writes Ibn-al-Arabi, "and those who adore Him in lifeless things see a lifeless thing ... Do not attach yourself to any particular creed exclusively, so that you disbelieve in all the rest."⁸⁷ Consequently, if the gnostic does not show regard to religious forms and observances, he is not at all liable to penalties. That which is good in religion may be evil in gnosis, a truth which Rūmī states thus : "The good deeds of the pious are the ill deeds of the

85. The Mathnawī. Vol. I; 3258.

بست درین و در دیک عمارتی... استانرا در کرد از این

86. The Qurān. 2. 109.

87. Nicholson (F.A.) : The Mystics of Islam; p.87.

favourites of God."

Gnosis is the end for which all worship was ordained. God gives the seeker His signs. If the seeker devotes his life to fulfilling the indications of His Will, then God relieves him of his burden of devotional works; and he ascends to knowledge of God. Mankind is but one community, and there is but one religion, the religion of love. This one religion is the true religion in which every child is born. In Rūmi's own words:

"The religion of Love is apart from
all religions : for lovers, the only
religion and creed is — God"⁸⁸

The Qurān is the Word of God. It is the Logos, whereby the illumined heart of the gnostic is fed and endowed with life everlasting. Rūmi believes that there are four esoteric senses of the Qurān.⁸⁹ There is the exterior sense. Underneath this sense is an interior sense, beneath which is a third interior sense, beneath which again is the fourth sense. None but the gnostic can perceive this inward sense. As such, his interpre-

88. The Mathnawi. Vol. II; 1770

ملت عشق از صمد دینیا جرات : عاشقان را ملت و مذمب مراست

89. Ibid. Vol. III; 4244-48.

tation of the Divine Word is the only correct interpretation. Rūmī is against any rationalistic and subjective interpretation of the Divine Word, for such an attempt either distorts its true meaning or at the most approaches its exterior sense. The interpretation of the gnostic, on the other hand is far from being rationalistic or subjective as it is immediately derived from God. It is revealed to him from God, the exposition of God's word from God Himself, as Rūmī puts it.

In other words, the gnostic is endued with the essential and eternal nature of the Qurān, or rather he has become the Qurān. And as uttered by him it expresses his own nature which is in conformity with the Divine Word.

"When you have fled for refuge to
the Qurān of God, you have mingled
with the spirit of the prophets.
The Qurān is a description of the
states of the prophets, who are the
fishes of the holy sea of Divine
Majesty."⁹⁰

Every thought that occurs to the gnostic is a
Divine message that plunges him into the unfathomable sea

90. Ibid. Vol. I; 1537-38.

جو تک در قرآن حق بگریختی :: بارون انبیاء آیینی
مست قرآن حالی انبیاء :: ماسیان عمر پاک کبریا

of contemplation. He sees things as they are, even when covered with innumerable veils, so that his certainty does not increase a bit when the veils are removed. To him everything, whether it be a sign of Divine Mercy or of Divine Wrath, paves the way to self-knowledge which is also the knowledge of God, for the Light of God has shed beauty and purity on the lowest as well as the highest faculties of his soul; transforming them one and all. In his communion with the Pure Being he is transformed into Pure Being.

Consequently, all his knowledge is self-knowledge. It is self-realisation, the unfoldment of the real within himself. In his own heart is found the true object of his desire so that he knows himself and he knows God. In the words of Valentin Weigel, both his sense perception and his knowledge of God are his self-knowledge,⁹¹ because after all as Rūmi maintains, "the world is the jar and the heart is the river; the world is the checker and the heart, the wonderful city."⁹²

The gnostic to whom the Divine Mystery is revealed is silent. He is silent because he is bristful with the

91. Flackenberg : History of Philosophy, p.59.

92. The Mathnawi. Vol. IV. 811.

یہ جان فست دل پر ہوتی ہے :۔ یہ جان حیرت و دل شہر عجب

Divine knowledge, too full to speak about it. He is bewildered at what he has beheld, is dazed at the ecstatic vision and his lips are sealed. This is the rapture produced by mystic illumination which Rūmī describes as the frenzy of mad-men, and those under its influence as 'the Moon-struck'. "By reason of inward sweetness" he says, "I sit with sour face : from fulness of speech I am silent."⁹³

But then, this silence is absolutely necessary, because the Divine Mystery must be jealously guarded from the vulgar. This mystery is to be proclaimed only to the men of understanding, and the gnostic must either subside into absolute quiet and passivity or else return to complete self-consciousness lest he disclose the mystery to all. As a matter of fact, he will be in possession of this treasure only when he has the dread of losing it either by way of speech or by way of disobedience.

And why should this mystery be guarded from the vulgar? It is because God has left them in ignorance with purpose. The ordinary human mind cannot stand the Divine

93. Ibid. Vol. I; 1760.

من ز شیرینی شستم دوزش : من ز بڑی سی با شتم جنت



Power and the gnostic for whom the veil is lifted should not divulge the mystery lest the life of mortals is destroyed and the world order comes to an end. Men are ignorant of their final destiny and yet, the faint glimpses of the Unseen preserve their hope and their faith in the Unseen.

"Keep silence, like the points of a compass
because the Virg

Has erased their name from the book of speech."⁹⁴

So, this is illumination; this is revelation, and this is inspiration. The eye of the soul has regained its sight and all is Beatific vision. The Divine Light, that was ever ready to be communicated to the soul, has poured in and all is light. "I entered the secret closet of my soul led by Thee...." says St. Augustine, "I entered and beheld the mysterious eye of my soul, above my intelligence. It was not the common light which all flesh can see, nor was it greater, yet of the same kind, as if the light of day were to grow brighter and brighter and flood all space...."⁹⁵

94. Nicholson (F.A.) : Selected Poems from the Divān-i-Shams-i-Tabriz; XXII, 10.

حاشیہ کی جہن نقطہ ابرامک : نام نادر دینر گشتی سرور

95. As quoted by Selbie (W.B.) in 'The Psychology of Religion' p. 260.



"When the spirit lovingly embraces thee,
In thy presence all images become spirit."⁹⁶

IV The mystic's achievement is very much a matter of Divine Grace, although his own efforts are indispensable. God is not found by search because He transcends all the means which the seeker employs to draw near to Him. Seeking, after all, is a temporal and human attribute, and so long as one is engaged in seeking one remains far from one's object of quest.

What brings the quest of the seeker into being is God's own invisible action. The follower becomes a real seeker only when God opens his eyes to the truth. "The self cannot be gained by the vede, " says the Katha-upanishad "nor by the understanding, nor by much learning. He whom the Self chooses by him the Self can be gained".⁹⁷ Consequently the wise seeker is the who remains passive and allows himself to be swept along by the unseen current of the Divine Grace, 'rain from the Unseen' as Rūmī calls it, and flows back to his original home.

96. Nicholson (N.A.) : Selected Poems from the Divān-i-Shams-i-Tabriz, p. 235.

روح دواز مهر کنایت گرفت : روح شود پیش از جدا نفوس

97. Katha-Upanishad; I, 11. 23.

"Grasp the skirt of his favour for on
 on a sudden he will flee;
 But draw him not as an arrow for the will
 flee from the bow."⁹⁸

Nevertheless, the ultimate realisation is the final fruit of constant effort and God bestows it only on those who work and pray for it. In the words of Būmi, "the devotional work and prayer is in proportion to the worshipper's aspiration : Man hath nothing but what he hath striven after".⁹⁹ Men of God have always led a life of personal effort and virtue, in spite of the fact that they were always conscious of the eternal grace and love to which they are predestined, and in spite of the fact they were always aware that God's grace is not a substitute for the work of the individual. Divine grace is absolutely unconditioned and uncaused; only it varies in its effects according to the nature and inherent capacity of the recipient. Everything is spiritual in so far as it receives the overflowing Divine Grace, and everyone sees the things of the Unseen in proportion to the measure

98. Nicholson (E.A.) : Selected Poems from the Divān-i-Shams-i-Tabriz; XX.I.

بگیرد از لطفش که با یاد بگیرد : ولی مکش تو بد نیز می که در گمان بگیرد

99. The Mathnawi. Vol. IV; 2912.

قدر همت باشد آن چه دما : یس، لا اله الا ما سعی

of his own spiritual enlightenment. God alone is the giver of all aspiration; and God alone is the bestower of all enlightenment.

As against this, the view of some Indian schools of thought is that the final liberation can be achieved entirely on one's own efforts without the intervention of the Supreme Being. The Jainas and the Buddhists, for instance, who give no place for any Supreme Being, maintain that liberation is within the grasp of every individual if he will but make the effort. The Buddha condemned even the principle of authority and claimed that no Truth should be accepted on his own authority. Nor is the goal reached by means of trances, however much they may form a part of the training in winning the detachment necessary for realising the Truth.

There is no Divine Grace because there is no Divine Being. The soul passes through the various stages of perfection and ultimately enjoys the bliss of Nirvāṇa only by making necessary endeavours. The Sāṃkhya yoga and the Bhagavadgītā likewise admit that the mystic achieves the condition of Brahman entirely by his own efforts. He realises his soul as immortal after purifying his soul, the only necessary pre-requisite for receiving the ultimate liberation.

Ramanuja does not accept this view. He says that it is not possible even to make efforts without Divine Grace. If it is true that contemplation of God helps one to liberation, it is also true that God Himself enables the yogin or the aspirant to concentrate his mind by purifying it. Divine Mercy alone can lead to the fruition of one's own soul. Without it man is enmeshed in God's *Māya*.

However, such a conception is but natural to these systems of philosophy as in them there is no question of love of one being to another nor of union. What they have before them is the question of self-interration and self-realization, which is the realization of the single spiritual essence. Liberation, therefore, is not achieved by love but by intensive introspection and by the mastering of senses and mind. To most of the Muslim and Christian mystics on the other hand, the ultimate aim is the union of one spiritual essence with another, love being the highest manifestation of man's relationship to God. Without love there can be no union with the Divine Beloved, and without the Divine Grace there can be no love towards the Supreme Being.

And what makes this effacement in the Divine Being possible is Divine Grace itself. Nothing, not even miracles

can bring about real conversion and effacement unless God Himself draws man to Himself. But Divine Grace does not invalidate the efforts on the part of the novice. His success depends on himself, because unless he feels the burden and longs for relief, he will not be relieved. He will never start the probe; he will never seek and he will never find. In the words of Rūmī, renouncing exertion is an act of disdain, and one who renounces exertion cannot become a true lover of God.

"God's pulling is, indeed, the original source; but, O fellow-servant, exert yourself, do not be dependent on that pulling."¹⁰⁰

The bliss of self-realisation is of its own kind, bearing in itself the genuine influence of a living God. The mystic has finally realised that he is one with God, and all his doubts are resolved, his desires fulfilled and his end achieved. The ignorance is destroyed by Knowledge and the Supreme is revealed, bathing his whole being in its overwhelming light. He is now in mere possession of God.

It is this possession that generates in him the spiritual energy necessary for accomplishing the task of cleansing the world of sin with fearlessness. Leaving

100. Ibid. Vol. VI; 1477.

اصل خود جذب است یکدیگر را جوابه تماش: کارکن موقوفه آن جذب مباحث

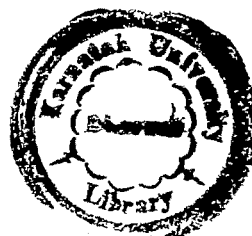
the vision of the Absolute, he re-enters into a state of consciousness, which is the second separation, *farr-i-thāni* and sets out to save all souls in the earthly abode. This separation is ordained by God Himself, so that the mystic fulfill his mission as the saviour of mankind.

But his reentry into the world of matter does not sever him from his contemplation of the One, and he continues to derive unalloyed joy through meditation, the joy that is inherent in his soul, even amidst the multitude of attractions in the world. The eternal knower of God as he is, he eternally lives in God, neither rejoicing at the pleasant nor being perturbed with the unpleasant. His saintly spirit is never soiled through contact with human sin as it constantly renews its purity by its unbroken union with God. He is the seer of our world, pouring in the Eternal Light, whenever he opens the eyes of his soul. "Such is His work", says Rūmī, "and my work is the same : the Lord of all created beings is the beautifier of the world."¹⁰¹

"We are the treasury
Of God's great mystery;

101. Ibid. Vol. V, 208.

کاروانیست و کارمینی، عالم آریست رب العالمین



The sea wherein doth dwell
His pearl incalculable.
From end to farthest end
Of Being we extend,
Yea, we sit upon
God's Imperial throne."¹⁰²

102. ARBERRY (A.J.) : The Rubaiyāt of Jalāl-al-Dīn-
Rūmī; p.49.

CHAPTER XIITHE PERFECT MAN

"What does a man need, but an
exalted genius, pure nature,
warm heart, keen sight and an
ardent soul?"¹

I. Perfection is the end of all philosophy and religion and the consummation of all life. For centuries man has been struggling to reach that perfection in his own way. Yet it has eluded him, and has remained only an ideal still to be attained.

The picture of a Perfect Man has been given by philosophers and poets in their own different ways. The analysis of the Perfect Man can be considered from the point of view of empirical perfection and spiritual perfection. The empirical perfection gives approximation to perfection, perfection as far as possible in this world. The transcendental picture of perfection, however, would be the picture of pure and perfect soul that has reached its

1. Iqbal (M.) : Bang-i-dira : Tulū-i-Islam.

real nature of "infinite consciousness, pure understanding, absolute freedom and eternal bliss,"² over living in the 'Eternal Now' of the Divine Energy.

The Greeks aimed at empirical perfection because they were more concerned with goodness and beauty in this world rather than with the attainment of soul's original nature. Their Perfect Man was none other than an ideal citizen with all the goodness and beauty of this life.

The Buddhists, on the other hand, distinguished between two kinds of perfection — Upādhisesa in which the human passions are extinct and Anupādhisesa in which the whole being is extinct. The former is the attainment of Nirvāṇa in this world wherein the five skandhās are still present, although the desire for continued being is extinct. It is the Jīvanmukta stage or the Sthitaprajna stage as it is described by the Gītā. But this Jīvanmukta stage does not impoverish the tathagats in anyway, because he intends to remain so far the sake of humanity. He is perfect in theory, and if he is still limited by body, it is because this limitation is willed by him for the good of humanity. In the latter case, there occurs the cessation of all being that follows the death of the saint. It is parinirvāṇa wherein the arhat disappears from the world of matter.

2. Radhakrishnan (A.) : Indian Philosophy. Vol. 1; p.333.

The Jainas talk of two stages of perfection.

Sayogakevalī is perfection in this life still limited by the activity in this life which, however, does not impart any karma in the life of the sage. This is the Jīvanamukta stage wherein the sage has not yet attained to the disembodied perfection. Ayogakevalī is perfection after the body is cast away. The released soul regains its pure nature and lives eternally in a transcendental world called Siddhasālo beyond space and time.

But there is a difference between these conceptions and that of Rūmī because in the former case the Perfect Man in the Jīvanamukta stage is not absolutely perfect as he is still bound by the body while in the latter case Rūmī's Perfect Man, Ahl-al-Haqq, as he is called by Rūmī, the follower of the Real, ascends to God and becomes one with Him here and now, in the world of matter and while still

limited by the body. And once he realises his transcendental self, his eternal, uncreated and divine self, no limitation hinders his union with the Divine Being, no earthly influence impoverishes him and nothing unholy diminishes his perfection. He is one with God and God is one with him, so that there remains none except God.

As the purity of gold is not impaired by the base forms it receives from human hands, so nothing external

affects the essential nature of the Perfect Man. A grape once ripe does not become unripe again; the pearl, born of water, does not revert to its original condition of water, and the river, when it reaches the ocean, does not flow back to its source. The Perfect Man who has realized his ultimate spiritual nature, does not return to the imperfect state. He lives on the lofty planes of spiritual heights, absolutely liberated from the considerations of the body, to its growth and decay. Once merged in the blissful condition no relapse is possible.

"When earth becomes gold, its
earthly aspect remains not;
when sorrow becomes joy, the
thorn of sorrowfulness remains
not."³

The innermost essence of man is divine. His spirit is the spirit of God. Hence the Prophet said, he who knows himself knows his Lord. A little God in himself, sharing the quality of eternity with God, he knows himself as the Divine Self only by seeing himself as the microcosm. And the Perfect Man is he who has realized his divine self, his original self and his subsequent union with the Divine.

3. The Mathnawi, Vol. VI: 741.

نیک زرشده میاوت مای مانه: نم فرح شد مارمناکی مانه

This view of Rūmī is akin to Aristotle's view that the Ultimate Reality is the unity of intelligence and will, the Divine Life being identical in its essence with the ideal life of man which is his rational activity. Now, perfection of will involves perfection of intelligence and perfection of both will and intelligence in turn involves emotional perfection. Bradley gives a similar conception when he says that in man feeling, thought and volition have their own defects. Nevertheless, they suggest 'something higher'⁴. And what is this something higher? It is in the same kind, the perfection of these elements and their harmonious unity.

This realisation of the transcendental self, which is the goal of man's life, is not a mere possibility of a few. Every man can attain to this ideal and every age has realised it through some one. Man is entitled to acquire his lost treasure of eternal communion with the Divine Beloved, and he can regain it here and now. Only he has to seek it ardently and earnestly.

Rūmī is a believer in the infinite potentialities and the divine values of the human soul. For him there cannot be any fundamental difference between sainthood and

4. Bradley (F.H.) : Appearance and Reality; p.180.

prophethood, as both represent a stage of development which is accessible to everyone. Every religion presents eternal truths that can be realised by everyone. Its stories as given in the scriptures are far from being mere historical occurrences never to be repeated. They are on the other hand, the timeless truths and happenings that are destined to occur and reoccur in every human soul for all times. In other words, it is open to every individual not only to become a saint but also to become a prophet. So, he says:

"Contrive, in the way of one who serves God well, that you may gain the position of a prophet in a religious community."⁵

This attempt of Rūmī to deny the finality of prophethood goes against the spirit of Islam, which stamped Mohammed as the last of all Prophets. The assertion of identity of the divine and the human souls was pardonable in its eyes, but the assertion of identity of man and prophet was unpardonable. Man can claim "ana'l-Haq" "I am God", but he cannot claim "Anā Nabi" "I am the Prophet". It is Rūmī who abolishes the distinction between sainthood and prophethood by claiming that each and every individual soul is the possessor of the prophetic consci-

5. The Mathnawi. Vol. V: 469.

مکرکن در راه نیکو خدمتی: تا نبوت یابی اندر آمتی

business.

The Divine Beauty rises in all searching souls as Noah, as Jesus and Mohammed and as Ali and Mansur, and it shall continue to rise assuming different forms and wearing different garments till the end of the world, a conception that finds expression in the Gita as well. Whenever there is decline in spirituality, says Lord Krishna in the Gita, whenever there is a crisis of character, I rise in that age. But there is a difference between the two conceptions. Kṛṣṇa's view of the rise of the Divine Essence in every age does not imply the conception of Avatāra, incarnation, while in the Gita God who is reborn in this life incarnates Himself for the good of humanity.

"Therefore in every epoch after Mohammed a saint arises to act as his vicegerent : the probation of the people lasts until the resurrection. He is the living Inā, who arises in every age, whether he be a descendant of Umar or of Ali."⁶

II. The Divine Consciousness is immanent in the Perfect Man. He is identical with Logos and is the out-

6. Ibid. Vol. II; 815 and 817.

پس ہر دوری دلی قائمست : تا قیامت : زمایش دایمست
پس ایمان قائمست : تا قیامت : تا قیامت : تا قیامت

ward form and limitation of the invisible and infinite
 Sea of the Divine Unity. As such, he is both real and
 phenomenal. A mirror of Truth as he is, receiving images
 innumerable from the Unseen and reflecting them in things
 one and all, he is none other than God Himself. The
 mirror has no bound and the reflection of every image
 shines unto everlasting without any imperfection.

"That Moses holds in his bosom the
 formless infinite form of the Un-
 seen reflected from the mirror of
 his heart. Here the understanding
 becomes silent or else it leads
 into error because the heart is
 with Him, or indeed the heart is
 He."⁷

Thus endowed with the Divine Consciousness he
 knows every stage traversed by the soul in its journey
 from Unity to plurality. The experience of the Divine
 Consciousness brings itself one's identity with all
 cosmic existence. The presence of the spiritual princi-
 ple in him leads to the existence of an ordered unity in
 his whole being, and it is in virtue of this principle
 that he identifies himself with all forms of existence.

7. Ibid. Vol. I. 3485, 3499.

صورتی صورت بی حد فیه :: رآینه دل دارد آن موسی بحیب
 نقل اسماکت آمد یا مصل :: ز آنک دل با است یا حود است دل

physical and psychic. The knower, like monads of Leibniz, is the microcosm and also the macrocosm, which contains the microcosm and which, in turn is mirrored through the microcosm.

Absorbed in the One and in the All, he is the eternal spectator of all times and all existence. The whole universe is bristful with his immaculate spirit, so that he is the matter and he is the spirit, he is the subject and he is the object. He is the purifier of the universe and the very source of its perpetual regeneration and recreation. All this imparts a beatific joy in his association with the whole creation and his contemplation of it.

The Perfect Man is the final goal of creation and is the end of the process of evolution. He is the ideal towards whom the whole creation ceaselessly strives to rise and at whom the whole course of evolution aims. In fact, he is the spirit of Divine revelation, through whom the purpose of creation is fulfilled. Nothing precedes him and nothing follows him.

In other words, he is the source and animating principle of all that exists in the two worlds. He is the ruling power in both the worlds containing within himself the higher types of the Real as well as the lower, the

cosmic man who lives in union with the Logos and who holds within himself the archetypes of everything. The cosmos is nothing but the unfolding of him and the manifestation of him; it is an echo of the reflections of the Divine harmony reflected in him. Nothing that exists evades him, as he contemplates the essence and final causes of all things, even prior to the objective existence of the things themselves, the fruit before the seed and the pearl before the sea. Thus he encompasses the whole cosmos and stands to the world of thought and things in the relation of an architect to the house he has planned and built, built cell by cell as bees build the honey-comb, filling all bodies with sweetness knowledge and love of God.⁸

Hence he is never lost to the world, the light of the world, as Rumi calls him, that is at once joined with all and yet apart from all. He is isolated from mankind only in so far as he abides solely in God and contemplates nothing but the Divine Unity. But as the created form of the universal Spirit, he is the whole of which they are the individualisations. Being assimilated and absorbed into himself the Divine attributes which constitute the reality of the universe, he is the soul

8. Ibid. Vol. I: 1011-13.

of the universe, the mind whence arise the individual souls, sustained by it and illumined by it. Even if he is absent for a while, it is out of compassion for his fellowbeings so that they are enabled to display themselves like the stars after Sun-set. Without him the universe cannot survive, for his return to God leaves it dark and forlorn.

"Do not grieve : he will not become lost to thee; nay, but the whole world will become lost in him."⁹

The knowledge of the Perfect Man is supra-rational illumination. It is the supra-rational and supra-sensuous knowledge in which God reveals Himself to the mystic and endows him with an immediate insight into the heart of all things. It springs from within the soul and can be achieved only through purification of the soul from everything other than God. Man can know like God and work like God by living in God, and the Perfect Man who has his being in God is a clear mirror of Reality, receiving the impressions from the Unseen and reflecting them in full. "The Sufi book is not composed of ink and letters," says Pīrī, "it is naught but a heart white as snow."

9. Ibid. Vol. IV. 566.

عَمَّ مَخْرِبَاوَه نَرَدَد اوز تو : بلك عالم ياره نَرَدَد اندو

As such the Perfect Man is the medium through which God knows Himself and all His creation. Every kind of knowledge is originally revealed to him as he sees things even before they appear in the mirror of existence. His all-inclusive and universal spirit has the intuitive knowledge of the fixed essences of all things materialised in the world of phenomena, so that he reads their capacities and sees beyond their actual and present state of existence. The entire content of past, present and future is open to him, and he knows everything both synthetically and analytically the 'how' and 'why' of things, seeing the end of everything in its very beginning. In the words of Iûmi:

"Hell and Paradise are entirely parts of him : he is beyond any thought that you may conceive of him."¹⁰

This possessor of omniscience sees God although he sees himself. His knowledge of God implies his knowledge of self and his knowledge of self implies knowledge of every kind of cosmic existence. When the self is known, the highest reality is known and then, nothing remains to be known. The notion of difference vanishes entirely from the illumined consciousness, with the result

10. Ibid. Vol. II; 3106.



that all distinctions between the past, the present and the future, between the gross and the subtle are wiped off. The soul contains the eternal, and the knower finds the One Self pulsating everywhere.

In other words, what the perfect soul beholds is God in creation and the effacement of creation in God, the one in the many and the many in the One. What it beholds is God without the creation as well as the unveiling of God by creation. He is the source of infinite power and knowledge.

Hence Rūmī observes that the Perfect Man is the absolute witness of God. He is the eye of God, the object of His regard in both the worlds. His heart is the real place of worship and his glorification of God is perfect glorification, superior even to that of angels, who unlike him could not comprehend all the aspects of the Divine Nature. God asked "Am not I your Lord?" and all souls answered "Yes". But their confessions differed in character and value from the confessions of Adam, who also said "yes" but with the heart illumined by the light of Love, so that as Rūmī remarks even "the angels became beside themselves in amazement of his teaching and gained from his glorification of God a holiness other than they posses-

sed before."¹¹ The Divine Sun dwells in his heart and he beholds all the mysteries without veil. God is omniscient, so too is he, as he knows God Himself. He is ^{omni}potent too, as God's power flows into his heart and makes him omnipotent. Having thus received Light from God Himself without the intervention of any medium, he has attained to the utmost felicity. There is no power outside him.

"Adam created of earth, learned
Knowledge from God : his know-
ledge shot beams up to the
Seventh Heaven."

"That mosque is phenomenal, this
heart is real. The true mosque
is nought but the hearts of the
spiritual captains. The mosque
that is the inward consciousness
of the saints is the place of
worship for all : God is there."¹²

Though seemingly awake to the things of the world,
he is really absorbed in God. His disinterestedness is
transcendent, so transcendent that he is completely inde-

11. Ibid. Vol. I; 2650.

نامک سجد شدار تدربین او. قدس دیر یافت از نقد این

12. Ibid. Vol. I; 1012, Vol. II; 3110-11.

آدم خاک رقی آموخت علم... تا ایستم آسمان امدت علم
آب محاربت این حقیقت، ای غریبه نیت سجد جز درون مردان
سجده گان اندرون اویاست. : سجد گاه جمله است آبی خدایست

pendent of the world and its influence, and is indifferent to the reverence or irreverence of man. His knowledge is infinite and he is honoured in himself. He does not belong to the world for he no more needs the world.

And yet, he returns to the world, observes its laws and turns to God in prayer in order to make the glory of Divine Love manifest to the world by his example. His pure spirit is associated with the bodily faculties only for this purpose of delivering his fellowmen from the bondage of illusion and ignorance.¹³ A symbol of dynamic and creative spiritual life as he is, the world, with its rules and regulations, its social and political obligations, is for him nothing but a means to the fuller spiritual unfolding for all. It is his duty ordained by the Divine Will which works in him, to work for the welfare of the world, and he does his duty, so that the light which he brought may shine forth on all. Such a supra-sensate status that is the infinite dignity of man belongs to him alone.

There are four journeys of the Perfect Man. The first begins with growth and ends with passing away. The

13. Ibid. Vol. III; 2403-9.

آن چه نورشیم درون نور غرق: بی دانم کرد خویش را نور فرق
رخس روی نماز و آت ملا: هر تعلیمت ره مر خلق را

second journey is the soul's abiding in God, haqq, in which state it journeys "in the Real, by the Real and to the Real,"¹⁴ thereby becoming a reality, haqq, itself. He, then raises himself to the station of the qūtūb, the station of Perfect Manhood. In the words of Nicholson: "He becomes the centre of the spiritual universe, so that every point and limit reached by individual human beings is equally distant from his station, whether they be near or far."¹⁵ In his third journey the Perfect Man turns towards the phenomenal world. The fourth and the last journey is his physical death.¹⁶

John A. Subhan enumerates three great journeys of the Perfect Man called the 'Safarūl Abd', the journey of the creature, the upward path followed by his corresponding to the 'safarūl-Haqq' 'the journey of Reality', the downward path consisting of the stages of devolution traversed by the Absolute. The perfect Man's journey along the Path is, in fact, the upward movement of God Himself from the sphere of manifestation back to the Unmanifested state. In manifesting Himself God had passed through

14. Nicholson (R.A.): The Mystics of Islam; p. 164

15. Ibid. p.164

16. Ibid. p.165.

several stages of devolution. The Perfect Man traverses these stages of divine devolution in obverse order.

In his Sayr-il-illāh, journey to God the Perfect Man sets forth from the world of creation to the world of Command and reaches Haqīqat-i-Mohammadi, the reality of Mohammed. In his Sayr-fi-'illāh, journey in God, he becomes absorbed in the essence of God and reaches the stage of Ahdiyyat, passing away from his phenomenal self. It is in his Sayr-an-'illāh, journey from God that he travels back to the world of manifestation.¹⁷

Radhakamal Mukerjee regards worship of symbols as the initial stage in the spiritual journey of the Perfect Man, the Illumination of Names as it is called by the sufis, wherein the seeker is conscious of the symbol rather than the object. The second stage is the Illumination of the Attribute wherein the seeker meditates some aspect of God, considering the symbol as identical with the object. The power of receptivity in him determines the illumination he receives. It is in the third and the final stage that he meditates the self which becomes identical with the Supreme Self, God, in which identification the self is found rather than lost.¹⁸

17. Subhan (John A.) : Sufism, its saints and shrines, pp. 75-76.

18. Mukerjee (Radhakamal) : The Theory and Art of Mysticism, pp. 5-6.

Thus, he journeys not only to God but also in God and with God. His soul manifests unity in plurality by returning with God to the phenomenal world, from which it set out at the same time continuing in the unitive state. "He goes towards God by inward love, in eternal work and he goes in God by his fruitive inclination, in eternal rest. And he dwells in God and yet he goes out towards created things, in a spirit of love towards all things, in the virtue and in work of righteousness. And this is the most exalted summit of the inner life."¹⁹

Rūmī, therefore, describes him as the soul of true religion and piety, as the lamp that is placed in a not for its own sake but for the sake of others, as the sun that shines high in the heaven, not for its own sake, but for the sake of others.²⁰ He is the Truth that is beyond infidelity and religion, neither a Christian, nor a Jew, nor a Muslim, neither of the East, nor of the West, neither of the land nor of the Sea, neither of the nature nor of the heaven, neither of the empyrean nor of the dark and neither of existence nor of entity.²¹

The Perfect Man is the guide on the way. He is

19. Nicholson (R.A.) : The Mystics of Islam; pp.163-64.

20. Arberry (A.J.) : Discourses of Rūmī; p.114.

21. Nicholson (P.A.) : The Selected Poems from the Divān-i-Shams-i-Tabriz; xxxi.

the essence of the way, the healer of souls, as Rūmī calls him, who shows the imperfect souls the right method of achieving the ideal. Without him the disciple is bewildered. He is the only means whereby all illusion and infatuation are driven away, all doubts and difficulties removed, all egoism destroyed and the ultimate union between the soul and God is realised. He is a fighter in God's cause, speaking to men according to the measure of their own understanding, so that they attain to the perfection of which they are capable. Nevertheless his call to mankind is a veil and deception in so far as God is the essence of both the caller and the called. It is God's call to the modes of His own being, the particular aspects of Himself to absorption in the Universal.

Purity gained through the spiritual influence and guidance of the guide is more real and lasting than purity gained through the holy law of the religious practice. The heart of the guide is a tank which has a secret road to the Sea, assimilating to itself all purity and goodness and pouring out the same through various channels in the world of matter. He is a book in front of the novice, the Guarded Tablet containing all the mystic knowledge, and seated by his side the novice knows the secrets of the two worlds.

It is, therefore, essential that the novice becomes

effaced in the guide, this effacement in him being anterior to effacement in God. Just as earth develops all its latent beauty by being subservient to the influence of spring, the novice develops all the spiritual beauty latent in him by giving himself entirely to the spiritual teacher. The Divine Unity is realised through him and by becoming mystically one with him.

"To the friend, when he is seated beside his Friend, a hundred thousand tablets of mystery are made known."²²

The Perfect man performs miracles by bringing into play the higher spiritual causes without destroying the external causes. There are hidden graces showered on him by God. These graces do not come into perception of the senses, hence, are indescribable. The miraculous powers of the mystic are one of them, in so far as they are also a favour conferred on him by God. The essential nature of a miracle is to bestow spiritual life, knowledge and power on those who are capable of receiving them to "bestow everlasting life on the spiritually dead,"²³ as Rūmī puts it.

22. The Mathnawi. Vol. VI; 2641.

یار را یار چون نشسته شد: در هزاران لوح برداشته شد

23. Ibid. Vol. III; 2502.

جان جلد معجزات انبیا دردد: کو بچشمه مرده راجان ابد

There is a distinction between the evidentiary miracles of the prophet, *Mūjizāt* and the secret miracles of the mystic, *Karāmāt*. The evidentiary miracle is associated with a manifest breach in the world order as it produces effect upon something inanimate like the rod of Moses. If it produces an immediate effect on the soul it is because the soul is brought into connexion with the producer of the effect himself through a hidden link and not because of its effect upon the inanimate object. Nevertheless, they are really for the sake of the spirit of man, so that by means of their effects upon the inanimate objects the inmost soul is changed for better. In other words, their value consists in being accessory to man's conversion. Apart from this they have no significance whatsoever.

The miraculous influence of the mystic, on the other hand, is a gift of Divine Grace that works invisibly and directly on the soul. It impresses the heart of the disciple and there are a hundred such immediate spiritual resurrections within the spiritual brothers. Rūmī therefore emphasises the distinction between the transient exhibition of miraculous power and the perpetual miracles brought about in the hearts of men and says that the miracles of the Perfect Man are stronger and more enduring in so far as they bestow everlasting life and power on the

uninitiated.

But the orthodox view of some sufis abolishes this distinction, and holds that both kinds of miracles are substantially the same. The saints are the Prophets' witnesses and so all their miracles are derived from him. There are others who do not give any importance to miracles at all. To them they are a temptation that obstructs the way to God, 'the veils' as Jūnayd calls them "which hinder the elect from penetrating the inmost shrine of the Truth."²⁴ "God used to bring before me wonders and miracles," says Bayāzid, an upholder of the same view, "but I paid no heed to them and when He saw that I did so, He gave me the means of attaining to knowledge of Himself."²⁵

In the Yoga Sūtra Patañjali there is a mention that the yogi gets supernatural powers during the process of his yogic practices. They are Siddhīs. But Patañjali warns that such powers are really obstacles to samādhi, though they are regarded as perfections when one acquires them.²⁶ They are the by-products of a higher life. They are the flowers which we pick up on the way, though we do

24. Nicholson : The Mystics of Islam; p. 131.

25. Ibid. p. 131.

26. Yogasūtra; iii-21.



not set on our journey to gather them.²⁷ As Radhakrishnan mentions, in Bunyan's Pilgrims Progress the pilgrims to the celestial city find a little wicket even at the very gateway of heaven that leads to Hell. He who falls a prey to the spells and miracles goes downwards.²⁸

Refuting this view still others assert that the miracles cannot be a temptation at all because it is not that saint performs the miracle, but that the miracle has been granted or manifested to him. Moreover, such a manifestation cannot take place save in ecstasy when the saint is completely under the control of the Divine. His own personality being in abeyance, God alone speaks with his lips and works with his hands. To interfere with him, therefore, is to interfere with God, and to oppose him is to oppose God.

However, even in the face of these opposing views, the unalterable fact remains that miracles neither make nor mar a mystic, for as Qushayri observes "A saint would be nonetheless a saint, if no miracles were wrought by him in this world."²⁹ After all as Rumi says, a true miracle does not so much consist in bringing about a suspension

27. Yoga-bhāṣya; iii-33.

28. Radhakrishnan (S.) : Indian Philosophy; Vol.II.p.367.

29. Nicholson (R.A.) : The Mystics of Islam; p.130.

of the world order as in substituting the higher self for the lower.

"It (that miracle) bestows infirmity on anyone that is uninitiated, but it bestows power on the spirit of an intimate." 30

The Perfect Man transcends all relations of Otherness. He has stripped himself of all externals and has lost connection with all that is transient and impermanent, just as the person awakened from a dream loses all connection with the dream world. As such, numerical plurality does not exist for him so also all relations and secondary causes that belong to the world of plurality. Nothing remains in his infinite union with the One, a union that is beyond all signs and evidences.³¹

The Perfect Man is self-sufficient. He comprises the totality of existence as he represents the infinite Divine Mercy and Love, uniting within himself all contraries and all oppositions. Therefore, nothing exists that he cannot find in his own essence. The world derives its

30. The Mathnawi. Vol. VI; p.1310.

عجز بخش جان بر نامری: بیک قدرت بخش جان مری

31. Ibid. Vol. II; 2811.

توجهت گون بروم از جهات: در وصال آیات کویا بیات

existence from him and all things good and beautiful in it gain the qualities of goodness and beauty from the Divine goodness and beauty reflected in his heart. So what he contemplates is his own face and what he worships is his own self. And yet, this contemplation and this worship envelops all regions and all existence.

"At every moment he is bowing down
in worship to himself : the bowing
is performed in front of the mirror
for the sake of beholding the face."³²

The Perfect Man is dead to self, his own will having been merged in the Divine Will in his ultimate relation of love. He has assumed the Divine qualities and has his being in God so that it is God that lives in him, speaks through him, and works through him. Therefore, he exists and does not exist at the same time. He is the dead man walking on earth with his spirit dwelling in heaven.³³ "His reality is hidden" says Rūmī, "though he is in peoples presence; how should the people see anything but board and fyock?"³⁴

32. Ibid. Vol. VI; 2260.

سجدہ خود را می کند بر لوحه او: سجدہ پیش آئینه است از هرا

33. Ibid. Vol. VI; 742-44.

ی رود چون زندگان بر خاکدان.. مرده و جانفش شده بر آسمان

جانش را این دم بالا می کشیت: گریه میزد روح او را نقل بیست

34. Ibid. Vol. IV; 833.

می اش پنهان و او در پیش.. خلق می بیند غیر پیش و دلق

It is, therefore, an error to claim equality with the holy. They are God's substitutes, his representatives on earth, and there is an infinite difference between them and their fellow beings, however much they may appear to be like them. In the words of Rūmī, both the species of bee eat and drink from the same place; and yet from the hornet comes a sting and from the bee pure honey. Both the species of deer eat grass and drink water, and yet, from one comes dung and from the other pure musk.³⁵

Being the mirror of Truth the Perfect Man reflects the real forms of all things, good as good, and evil as evil. He discerns the innermost nature of all things and distinguishes the true from the false, the shallow from the deep and the worldly from the spiritual. As such, he is the only criterion by which everything is judged and valued, the only touchstone by means of which everything is tested. This process of testing goes on till the end of the world, till he sifts the righteous from the wicked, by causing the latent dispositions of each to be exhibited.

"His form has passed away and he
has become a mirror; naught is

35. Ibid. Vol. I; 268-69.

مردد گون رسد و زنده ارجعل: یک شد زن تیش و زین دیگر عمل
مردد گون آهونگی و زنده و آب: این یکی مرگش شد و زن آن یک ناب

there but the image of the face
of another."³⁶

Consequently, if one hates the Perfect Man, it is because one sees the image of one's hateful self in him; and if one loves him, it is because one sees one's own good self in him. His is a body that is no more human, indestructible even by the daggers, so that he who drives a thorn into his eye hurts himself and he who stabs him stabs himself. "If you see an ugly face in that mirror" says Rūmī, "'tis you; and if you see Jesus and Mary, 'tis you". He is neither this nor that : he is simple, pure and free from attributes of self : he has placed your image before you."³⁷

The Perfect Man is the possessor of absolute dispassion and desirelessness with regard to every object of desire except God. He has the total lack of identification with the body and bodily life, and he deems all enjoyments of this world as well as the next as transient, perishable and as hindrances to his life in God. This quality of

36. Ibid. Vol. IV; 2140.

نقش ادنائی و او شهادتینه : غیر نقش روی غیر آجای نه

37. Ibid. Vol. IV; 2142-43.

در پی روی زشت آن هم ندی : در بیتی عیسی و مریم ندی
از نه است و آن ساده است : نقش نور پیش تو نهاده است

dispassion and desirelessness is far from being the mark of incapacity to enjoy, nor is it a reaction to his over-indulgence in the pleasure of the senses. It is the natural outcome of his life in God, of his contentment, that is independent of all want, and is in spite of his perfect capacity to enjoy the pleasures of life.

His prayers are not for obtaining any object of desire whatsoever, nor for the removal of any trouble. All pleasures experienced by him are essentially spiritual, even those that come through the physical senses, as they have their source in pure unselfishness and unworldliness. In the words of Rūmi: "If there is delicious food and drink in the world yet, his pleasure in them is only a branch of the extinction of worldly pleasure. He is a man of spiritual pleasure, and has become the recipient of that pleasure",³⁸ Or rather, as the *Gita* puts it, his is a stable mind established in Samādhi, perfect tranquillity of mind that follows the abandonment of all cravings.

This moral endeavour gives him the poise of absolute equality in treating friend and foe, sorrow and happiness alike, the attitude of spiritual indifference to the

38. Ibid. Vol. IV; 404-5,

در جهان گرفتار و گرفتار نیست: لذت او فرغ محو لذت
گرفته از لذات بی تاثیر شد: لذتی بدو دولت گیر شد

joys and miseries of the world. Ever awake to the Divine Presence, he neither rejoices nor recoils. There is no passion, no fear and no anger, so that he is free from malice, and free from egotism, is friendly and compassionate, is forgiving by nature and above all ever content. No infatuation can overtake him and no sorrow can perturb him. He is the wise man of the Gītā.

"Who whom pleasure and pain are alike,
who is not tormented by these contacts
and who is eligible for immortality."³⁹

He never loses his equanimity in either praise or blame, enduring patiently the punishment inflicted by his fellowmen and treating them with fair words that flow forth from his divinely inspired wisdom. He is fearless and his fearlessness is the result of his purity and single minded devotion to God who is Himself the source of all fears as well as the remedy of all fears. There is none in the world as humble as he for he is the tree laden with fruit and drawn down to earth. It is this humility that keeps his virtues hidden from all even from himself, so that he seeks reward from none, not even from God.

The Perfect Man has attained to sobriety and

39. The Bhagavadgītā. Ch. II; v-15.

permanence, says Ghazzālī, as his is a life Divine. He is unmoved by fears and states affect him no longer. Whether he suffers hardship or is at ease, whether he has little or much and whether men harm him or keep faith in him, it makes no difference to him. All the desires of the self having been vanished only that which pertains to the spirit remains.⁴⁰ The Gītā describes him as the man of divine virtues and "Sublimity, forgiveness, fortitude, external purity, absence of malice, absence of the feeling of self-importance are the marks of one who is naturally endowed with divine virtues."⁴¹

In his contemplation of God he transcends all consciousness of body and mind, all egoism and all ethical values, so that whatever he does is the standard of right action in the world. He is a lover of God, a lover whose love transcends all other varied forms of it in the two worlds and swallows up all other emotions besides itself. As a possessor of this unconquerable passion, he pervades the whole cosmos of love and kindness in individual souls.

Only Perfect Men can make a Perfect man known, since he alone can discern his own kind. Others are vict-

40. Smith (Margaret): Al-Ghazzālī, the Mystic; p. 174.

41. The Bhagavad-Gītā; Ch. XVI; v. 3.

ing of their own subjective and more or less inadequate ideas of his nature, for what they behold in the clear mirror of his heart is nothing but their own image. After all the breath that the reed-player breathes into the reed is in the player himself and not in the reed. The music belongs to him, as he finds in the reed only the music that he has in his own soul.⁴²

Divine Grace reaches the world through the medium of the Perfect Man, whose religious function as a mediator between man and God corresponds with his metaphysical function as the unifying principle by which the opposed forms of reality and appearance are harmonized. The fusion of spirituality with corporeality in him enables him to fulfil his mission of displaying in sensible form and colour the mysteries of the Truth. And so, he descends from the plane of divinity to the plane of humanity in spite of his unqualified and unconditional union with the divinity. But for this descent to the world of matter he would not be the demonstrator of God's wisdom on earth, and but for his absolute absorption in the Divine essence, he would not be endowed with spiritual energy, so necessary for accomplishing the task.

42. The Mathnawi. Vol. II; 1792-93.

نقش ی بی که در آینه است : نقش است آن نقش آن آینه نیست
 دم که مردنای اندر نای کرد : در نور ناست نه در مورد مرد

Rūmī, therefore, describes him as the viceregent of God on earth, His vicar who calls all mankind to the Abode of Peace,⁴³ as a jar that opens to the Sea and that comprehends the sea,⁴⁴ and as the Sun, who sheds light on all, good and evil alike, irradiating the whole cosmos with the Light of Real Being⁴⁵. He is the tree of divinity, whose root is fixed in eternity and whose boughs soar in the heaven of everlastingness. It is watered by the Sea of Divine Favour, and it bestows fruits of revelation on all. His spirit makes the world an image of itself before it returns to God.

"He is the Mahdī, the God-guided one and the Hādī, the Guide, O seeker of the right way, he is both hidden from you, and seated before you."⁴⁶

To be intimate with Perfect Man is to be intimate with God; to visit him is to visit God, and to enter into spiritual communion with him is not only to be free from sin but also from everything besides God. All do not reach this spiritual perfection, and yet, all derive

43. Ibid. Vol. I. 226.

44. Ibid. Vol. VI. 817.

45. Ibid. Vol. II. 819.

46. Ibid. Vol. II. 818.

مهدی و صادی و سید ای راه جو : هم بان و هم نشسته پیش او

strength from him and find comfort in him just as the infant finds comfort in its mother and gains strength from her, in spite of the fact that it hardly knows her. Adorned with God's Unity, clothed in God's I-ness, he is raised to God's Oneness, so that when people behold him they say that they behold God.

"Whoever wishes to sit with God,
let him sit in the presence of
the saints. If you are broken
off from their presence, you are
in perdition, because you are a
part without the whole."⁴⁷

Iqbāl repeats these words of Rūmī when he says:

"The ways of a lover are those of his Lord
He is compassionate to the believer and the
infidel alike
Though imprisoned in his soul in the prison
of water and soil,
His soul encompasses the entire horizon.
Like lightning he descends from the sky,
His abode is in the city and desert, in the
east and the west

47. Ibid. Vol. II; 2163-64.

عمر که خواهد بنشیند خدا: تا نشیند در حضور ادبیا
از حضور ادبیا که بکلی: در ملکای ز آنکس جزو بی کلی

He is Moses, Jesus and Khalīl,
 He is Mohammad, the Holy Book and Jibreel."⁴⁸

Thus the Perfect Man is the ideal of all creation and symbolizes the highest dignity of man. Whatever he does is an act of worship; wherever he wanders, it is a circuit round the Divinity and whenever he sits it is an act of prostration before God. Every utterance of his is God's name, and every hearing of his is a remembrance of God. When he opens his eyes, he finds nothing but God and His manifestation that never ceases to delight him. And no thought enters his mind that is not of God. There is none but God everywhere, for there is no room for ought else.

This is the life of Supreme Peace that knows no end, a life of ineffable perfection that is the lot of Perfect Man alone. His is the tranquilized soul, the soul at rest, the soul that has returned to God completely satisfied, enjoying silently the peace of its own perfection. One has only to turn to the poetic genius in Rūmī to behold the picture of such a life.

"The man of God is drunken without
 wine, is full without meat, is be-
 wildered and distraught. He is a

48. Iqbal. Jāvid Nāmā; pp. 242 and 244.

king beneath darvish-cloak, is a
treasure in ruin, Not of air, not
of earth, not of fire, not ^{of} water,
he is beyond infidelity and faith.
A boundless ocean made wise by the
Truth, he rains pearls without a
cloud. The man of God has hundred
moons and skies; he has ridden away
from Not-being. He is gloriously
attended and yet he is concealed,
so do thou seek and find him."⁴⁹

49. Nicholson (R.A.) : Selected Poems from the Divān-i-Shams-i-Takriz : VIII.

مرد خداست بودی شراب : مرد خدا سیر بودی کباب
مرد خدا و اله تحیرات بود : مرد خدا را نبود قور و خواب
مرد خدا شاه بود زیر و لعل : مرد خدا گنج بود در خراب
مرد خدا نیست ز باد و ز خاک : مرد خدا نیست ز نار و ز آب
مرد خدا بحر بود بی کزک : مرد خدا بارد در بی سماب
مرد خدا دارد صد ماه و پنج : مرد خدا دارد صد آفتاب
مرد خدا عالم از حق بود : مرد خدا نیست فقیه از کتاب
مرد خدا ز آن سوی کزیت نیست : مرد خدا راجه خطی و صواب
مرد خدا گشت سوار از غم : مرد خدا همه مالی و صاحب
مرد خداست نهان شمس وین : مرد خدا را تو بجوی و بیاب

C O N C L U S I O N

Religion as a way of life has been natural to man. It seeks to go beyond the veil of visible things and finds an inexhaustible fund of spiritual power to help man in his life's struggle. And the 'presence' of God has given strength to him in this struggle. It may be that out of fear God was born; perhaps love and gratitude are just as natural and gods were friendly beings. From the fear of the Lord in the Old Testament to the worship of God 'with godly fear and awe' is not a far cry. Those who had the direct experience of God gave us a picture of the intimate relation between man and God. We call them mystics, and some of them are prophets. Rūmī was a mystic, a philosopher and a prophet.

In this Dissertation an attempt has been made to present a coherent picture of the mystic philosophy of Rūmī, gleaned out of his ideas from his works. Writing of Rūmī's philosophy is a difficult task because Rūmī is predominantly a mystic-poet rather than a system-making philosopher. What appears to the naked eye is nothing but a veil of similes and metaphors that is used as an instrument for the expression of his mystical purpose. One who undertakes to scan his world of thought has, therefore, to toil hard till the divine message woven in the tales,

narratives and his outbursts of ecstasy, is reached.

The spiritual life of man is spontaneous and original and finds its expression in mysticism. Mysticism is a way of intuition, intuition that is not merely an expression of feeling but a synthesis of the cognitive, affective and conative attitudes. Rūmī is a mystic, and his life was full of intellectual and spiritual activity which inspired him to write his great mystic works like The Mathnawī and The Divān. When Rūmī writes he throws light on many a complex problem and explains in his inimitable way the mystery of the universe, dispelling the doubts of doubters and confirming the beliefs of believers. Transcending all limitations and all human scales of values he has not only discovered his own true being but has worked for the ascent of mankind to the higher goal of perfection, as his is the life divine that is the fruit of his total identification with the spiritual Ground of all existence — God. Rūmī expresses his views on God, freedom and perfection in his characteristic mystic way.

God is the All- One. He is the Divine Beloved, the candle that consumes everything besides itself. The moth must go to the candle and man must go to God: God who is beyond description, who is the First and the Last, who is the Outward and the Inward. Everything is ruled by the eternal principle of Divine Love, as God is Absolute Beauty, Absolute Love, Absolute Mercy and Absolute Justice, and for



that very reason is far from being an external entity to be worshipped and adored from afar. He is that Unseen Power which resides in man, nearer to him than his own neck-vein, that indefinable something which we all feel but which we do not perceive and which we do not comprehend.

Creation is the reflection of the All-Beautiful. The visible world and all therein is brimful with the Spirit of God, the ceaseless activity in its being, nothing but the manifestation of the Divine Consciousness. It is the court of Divine Justice wherein the base metal of man's self is purified and transuted into pure gold, for God said, "I created my creatures so that they may swear their bonds with My Mercy."

Man is a part of God too, a fragment of the Spiritual Whole. A divinemanation as he is, he is eternal and immortal in his transcendental aspect, so also in his existence of space and time. The stars shine in the sky and on the bosom of sea too. The sea passes away but the stars are still there. The world passes away but God is still there and man shall still be there too, as he comes from God.

The soul advances endlessly towards God traversing the scale of existence which begins in God and ends in God. Its present state of humanity marks the end of only one



perceptible stages in the scale of existence. When the footprints on the shore of the ocean disappear. Evolution is creative and aims at the consummation of all things in their ultimate return to their spiritual home, God. This supreme desire of the soul to be reunited with God is attained through love, Love that is the highest principle of life, the spiritual force that surges in on the cosmos. Being the essential substance of man it makes him a partaker of Infinite Life.

The spiritual journey implies various stages of spiritual development. The beginning is made by an initial act of faith which renders the aspirant capable of entering the threefold journey which Rūmī describes under the heads of Shari'at the Law, Tariqat, the Path and Haqiqat, the Truth. The influence of the spiritual guide on the purgative way is expressed through Taqlīd, imitation and Taḥqīq, reflection of Truth. Rūmī encourages asceticism as a negative way of life, although a certain amount of asceticism is necessary till one reaches the state of self-control, for nothing but Poverty makes one fit for selfcertification and for the subsequent acquisition of Tawakkūl or Trust in God which involves absolute passivity to the Divine Will. But Rūmī's view of life is melioristic, in so far as he believes that reliance on Divine Providence does not imply lack of efforts on the part of the mutewakkil.

However, the root of all spiritual satisfaction is contemplation, which restores man to his original nature by opening new avenues to union with the Divine. Union is not annihilation but transformation of the lower self into the higher, a transformation wherein takes place the purging of all phenomenal attributes and the subsequent regaining of one's own transcendental self. The mystic cannot become God absolutely howevermuch he may be invested with the Divine Attributes. And yet, the soul does become homogeneous with God like water that comes with the earth in plant or like air that becomes homogeneous with fire. Rūmī describes this union as the transformation of copper into gold and likens the spiritual ascension of soul to the ascension of sugar-cane to sugar. What leads to the fruition of one's own soul is Divine Grace, which indeed, is the original source of all individual striving. One must grasp the skirt of God's favour for one may not get Him otherwise.

The struggle for perfection is, in reality, the struggle for self-development and self-fulfilment. Perfection consists in the realisation of the divine self and none but the Perfect Man has attained to this ideal. Illumined by the rays of the Divine Sun he diffuses the light divine in the two worlds as his is the supreme mission of making God manifest everywhere.



And this was precisely Rūci's mission too, the divine message that he conveyed to the world being nothing but the fruit of his own living experience, experience that is the direct apprehension of reality expressed through intuition. Love entered his heart and it dawned upon him that the life that flows in men and women, in mountains and seas and in birds and beasts is the One Eternal Life of God to whom all things must go, and that all forms beautiful are nothing but lanterns where God's light shines through. What passes away is God's fading shadow we call the cosmos. Man is of God just as God is of man and man's worship is ever of God. Rūci's worship was ever of God too, more so when he sought to bring home his unanalysable and unique experience to all by his words and deeds so that men may get in their long span of life at least a faint glimpse of what he beheld in a single moment. He lived only for the benefaction and betterment of afflicted mankind proclaiming his eternal gospel of God and praying for its salvation. This selfless service he regarded as the highest religion, and in it he realised the supreme mercy of Love that has no comparison.

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